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James Q. Wilson

THE STATE OF THE NATION

A CONFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE FREE WORLD

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UNIVERSITY PRESS OF AMERICA,™ INC.
LANHAM • NEW YORK • LONDON

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Committee for the Free World

University Press of America,™ Inc.

4720 Boston Way
Lanham, MD 20706

3 Henrietta Street
London WC2E 8LU England

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Printed in the United States of America

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
Main entry under title:

The State of the nation.

Proceedings of a conference held May 11-13, 1984 in Washington, D.C. under the auspices of the Committee for the Free World.
1. United States—Economic policy—1981- —Congresses. 2. United States—Social policy—1980- —Congresses. 3. United States—Politics and government—1981- —Congresses. I. Bukovskiĭ, Vladimir Konstantinovich, 1942- . II. Committee for the Free World.
HC106.8.S73 1984 338.973 84-23444
ISBN 0-8191-4390-1 (alk. paper)
ISBN 0-8191-4391-X (pbk. : alk. paper)

Co-published by arrangement with
the Committee for the Free World.

All University Press of America books are produced on acid-free paper which exceeds the minimum standards set by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.

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Editor's Preface

The conference on "The State of the Nation"--the proceedings of which are contained in this book--was held on May 11-13, 1984, in Washington, D.C., under the auspices of the Committee for the Free World.

The conference opened with an address by Irving Kristol, who surveyed the political landscape after describing how the media and the opinion polls tend to distort our view of it. There followed two separate day-long discussions among a dozen panelists on "What's Going On Out There?" and "Can the Political System Respond?" Each session concluded with questions and comments from an invited audience of approximately two hundred people. In addition, there were two luncheon addresses, the first by Owen Harries, who considered the American condition in comparison with that of Western Europe, the second by Vladimir Bukovsky, who identified the elements of our political culture that have hampered the pursuit of an activist foreign policy.

The purpose of this conference was to address the condition of the country and the capacity--or incapacity--of our institutions to respond to that condition in an important, perhaps even decisive, political year. On this large question we hope this book will shed some light.

Steven C. Munson

WHAT'S GOING ON

OUT THERE?

Opening Statement

Irving Kristol*

I have been asked to speak on the theme of "What's going on out there?" It's a subject that I feel very comfortable with; anything more specific might have made me wonder about my competence. But on what's going on out there, I feel very competent indeed.

It's not easy to know what's going on out there, in part because we are so persistently instructed on how to see what's going on out there--but through a couple of very distorting mirrors. One of them, of course, is the media, about which I will not say too much except that there is a liberal bias in the media. I don't say that in any accusatory way. It's just that the media see things out there through a certain mindset.

I noticed just the other night, on a television news show, that some Republicans in the Senate who

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were opposing the allocation of money to El Salvador proposed by the President were described as "moderates." I then wondered: what does that make Mr. Reagan and all the other Republicans? Immoderates, obviously. But the media don't regard that choice of terms as biased. They're not aware that they're biased. They would deny quite sincerely that they're biased.

One of the interesting events of recent years has been the merger of Hollywood television and the print media, so that it's very hard now to see the world as anything but a soap opera. The media regard themselves, at one and the same time, as the authors of the soap opera, reporters on the soap opera, and actors in the soap opera. The media have become a form of popular culture. It is very difficult, therefore, even in the so-called serious press, which hardly exists any more in the United States, to get a real sense of what is happening.

One of the aspects of the mindset of the media is what has come to be called pop sociology--i.e., pseudo-sophisticated social science, sometimes infantile Marxism. The media really believe, for instance, that it is natural for poor people to be in a state of rebellion and that it's unnatural for poor people not to be in a state of rebellion. The media are uninterested in poor people working their way out of poverty. The media get interested in poor people only when they take to the streets, and they think it is right for poor people to take to the streets--they think that's where they belong.

The media, in short, believe that social and economic problems can and should be solved through political action. This is the great fallacy and the great heresy that permeates Western civilization. It was inherited from the French Revolution, which first propagated this belief, unlike the American Revolution which simply said that political problems could be solved by political action.

To get our information, therefore, as to what's going on out there through the media can be very misleading.

The other distorting mirror through which we are told to perceive what's going on out there is the opinion polls. I don't want to be too critical of

opinion polls because Ben Wattenberg is here, and he'll explain to me that an opinion poll properly done can tell you something. I won't argue with that. All I would say is this: our opinion polls are like our macroeconomists.

Macroeconomics gives you a static view of the economy; there's no room for entrepreneurship in the macroeconomic description of the economy. Similarly, opinion polls give you a static picture of popular attitudes; there is no room for leadership, and the quick transformation of those attitudes, in an opinion poll. Opinion polls cannot suggest what leadership might do to transform opinion, just as macroeconomic analysis cannot really tell you what is likely to happen if you have entrepreneurs and permit them to innovate. So aside from the fact that many of the opinion polls are, from a purely social-scientific point of view, thoroughly inadequate, even at their best they do not suggest the latent forces at work in a society--the latent attitudes that can be far more powerful than overt attitudes and can only be evoked by political leadership.

Having said that, and having explained why it's so difficult to see what's going on out there, let me try to say what I see is going on.

First, there is a distinct conservative trend in this country and in all of the Western democracies. It's an ambiguous trend, an amorphous trend, not easy to put your finger on. But it is quite clear, for instance, that patriotism is a much stronger sentiment today in all of the Western democracies, except perhaps Germany, than it was ten years ago. That is part of a conservative trend.

We also know there is a conservative trend because we have books that use the word "excellence" unashamedly. Excellence is a conservative word. Excellence is a conservative idea. When liberals have the Zeitgeist going with them, you hear about equality in education. When conservatives have the Zeitgeist with them, you hear about excellence in education. Now we hear about excellence in business, excellence in this, excellence in that. The very emphasis on excellence is itself a conservative emphasis, though again, it is very hard to know exactly what its political implications are.

One can see this conservative trend moving throughout this society. The sexual revolution is over. We're not having a counterrevolution; that's not the way things work in this world. What we're having is a routinization of the sexual revolution, so that young people now live together, then have big formal weddings and go off on honeymoons. It's a peculiar synthesis, but one we can live with. And this establishment of the sexual revolution itself encourages a conservative predisposition among younger people.

In addition, of course, we have the simple economic fact that the public sector, relative to the private sector, is no longer growing. This is a very important fact. The kinds of people who think of the public sector, rather than of the private sector, as the engine of our society are less numerous. Once again the private sector is attracting good people out of the public sector, and the public sector is being left to the bureaucrats who belong there--people who want nice, safe, secure jobs but who have no ideological drive.

Rather than saying that we are having a conservative revival or that there is a conservative mood within the nation, it might be more accurate to say that the liberal consensus that dominated American politics after World War II has broken down. That breakdown can be seen in all areas of policy.

There has been a breakdown in economic policy with the discrediting, at least to some degree, of the Keynesian model and the Keynesian policies appropriate to that model. It is no accident that most Keynesian economists are liberal and most liberal economists are Keynesian. The reason is that John Maynard Keynes saw a redistribution of income as critically important for economic growth. The emphasis on redistribution, while analytically not a necessary part of Keynesianism, in fact historically has been closely associated with Keynesianism. And that policy, as many conservative economists said it would, has turned out to be a recipe for inflation.

Nothing has quite replaced the Keynesian model, which is just as well. We probably shouldn't have any models. We were better off before we had any models of the economy. Economic models only persuade you to think that you know more than in fact you do know and

to make forecasts that in fact you cannot possibly make. It is absurd for Congress to demand that the Office of Management and Budget and the Congressional Budget Office make five-year economic forecasts. It's like predicting the weather five years from now. Nevertheless, they are required by law to do that.

The breakdown of Keynesian economics has left the field open once again for innovation in economic policy. We are now thinking of doing things like tax reform, which five years ago would have been regarded as quite unthinkable.

In social policy, we have--over the last decades --constructed the welfare state. Our problem now is to contain it, to make it efficient, to make it less costly. That will be the case whether the Democrats or Republicans win.

We have also discovered that the welfare state creates its own very disturbing problems. It creates, or can create, dependency. It turns out that if you make unemployment insurance more generous, somehow or other more people get to be unemployed. If you make workmen's compensation more generous, more and more workers seem to get injured, or have bad backs. Before this basic phenomenon of the perverse consequences of the welfare state, most liberals are helpless. They can't explain it, they didn't anticipate it, they don't like to hear about it. But the people know it's there. Therefore some reformation of the welfare state is clearly in order and will be popularly acceptable.

In addition, certain non-political, as it were, social policies have been discredited, though not explicitly. There is no liberal explanation for the fact that, over the past fifteen years, we have had a very marked increase in illegitimacy among teenage girls. We have more sex education. We have easy abortion. We have availability of contraception. All of these things were supposed to cope with the problem of illegitimacy. But the problem has gotten worse. The only explanation would be either that those who thought these policies would cope with the problem misread human nature, or that other social policies are working to defeat whatever good effects these policies might have.

The same thing is true of crime. No one who ever foresaw the construction of a welfare state thought we would have more crime rather than less.

All of these social phenomena that seem to be intimately associated with the welfare state simply cannot be explained within the traditional liberal consensus. New explanations are being sought, and sometimes very old explanations, based on a simple, more disillusioned view of human nature and of how human nature responds to economic incentives.

In foreign policy, the era of liberal internationalism, with its policy of "containment," seems to be coming to a close. Parochialism and provincialism in Western Europe, isolationism and unilateralism in the United States--all of these are responses to the fact that a period is over in foreign policy and that new foreign-policy approaches will be needed.

To see how things have changed, consider the case of Korea. When North Korea invaded South Korea, the United Nations took action: the British sent troops, the Turks sent troops, the Australians sent troops. But assume that North Korea invaded South Korea today. Would any of those countries send troops? Would the United Nations do anything? That is the difference between today and thirty years ago.

Once based on a community of Western democratic nations, the old policy of containment--ultimately through the use of military force--seems to have collapsed. We are faced with the construction of an appropriate new foreign policy, especially for the United States. I will not go into the crisis of NATO, about which much by now has been written. But there is a crisis, and this is on the agenda of American politics.

What is happening electorally in the United States, and in all Western democracies, is polarization. Conservative parties are becoming more conservative; liberal-left parties are becoming more leftist. In the United States today, there are conservative Democrats in Congress. They cannot nominate a President. Similarly, there are liberal Republicans in Congress. They cannot nominate a President. The nomination of a President, which is the key role of the parties, will be decided among conservative Republicans or among liberal-left Democrats.

The breakdown of the party system is now being deplored by social scientists who did so much to help break it down with their reforms. I'm not so sure it's a bad thing. In any case, it has broken down. What we now see is the rise of two kinds of populism, a populism of the Left and a populism of the Right, neither of which fits very easily into the party system.

The populism of the Left is a populism of frustration. Why did the British Labour party split into two? Why is the German Social Democratic party in the process of splitting into two? Why is our Democratic party splitting into two? The answer is that the agenda of the Left was put into effect. The left-wing parties have nothing left to recommend. They have no agenda. Therefore, those whom they represent, especially the young people, feel considerably frustrated; and since they have no intention of moving right, all they can do is move further left. That's what is happening in all of the Western democracies.

Right-wing populism is not the populism of frustration. It is the populism of resentment--perfectly legitimate resentment about all of the things that government has been doing to people over the past twenty years. But it's also a populism of opportunity in the sense that a lot of people, for the first time, see the possibility of a conservatism that does not simply have a caretaker frame of mind. They no longer expect Republicans to come into office and clean up the mess left by the Democrats, so that the Democrats can come in again and really run things, which is the pattern of post-war American politics. We have a right-wing populism which is much more assertive, groping for new approaches in economic, social, and foreign policy.

The clash of these two populisms, both existing within the parties, is going to define the future of American politics.

There are many other things happening out there. I will mention only one because I think it is of considerable significance. That is the phenomenon of Jesse Jackson.

The media do not understand this at all. They keep talking about "black pride." They keep saying Jesse Jackson is bringing blacks into the political

process--at a time when we have black mayors in Philadelphia, Chicago, Birmingham, Los Angeles! Jesse Jackson is not bringing blacks into the political process. That's not his role. Nor is it his role to legitimate something called "black pride," unless that is but another name for black nationalism, sometimes black racism, an attitude the media do not like to attribute to black leaders.

The significance of Jesse Jackson is that he has become the political leader of the American black community. None of the other black political leaders, most of whom have far more legitimate claims than he does to leadership, dares to criticize or oppose him. And what he is doing is bringing a Third-World perspective into American politics, legitimating it within the Democratic party, and thereby shifting the Democratic party to the left.

The interesting question is, why Jesse Jackson? Why did he appear? What was wrong with the established black leadership?

The answer is twofold. The established black leadership is the product of the civil-rights movement. But that movement, having been successful in achieving civil rights, has not been able to transform the condition of the inner-city ghettos. Black mayors turn out to be as impotent before the condition of the ghettos as white mayors.

Secondly, the established black politicians bet all their chips on the Great Society as the way to transform the economic and social conditions in the black ghettos. And they lost, because Great Society programs, far from improving those conditions, have probably worsened them in all sorts of indirect ways. It is out of frustration at the failure of both the civil-rights movement and the Great Society radically to improve the condition of the ghettos that Jesse Jackson emerges.

His emergence is a very dangerous phenomenon. Its effect will not be to elect more blacks; it may even be to elect fewer blacks. His campaign is going to move the Democratic party to the left, to incorporate into the American political spectrum certain Third-World ways of thinking and talking, and to legitimate them as part of American public discourse.

There are many other things going on out there. I could talk about them, but there are other people you have come to hear, and it's time that I yielded to them. So I'll turn the floor over to the moderator of the panel, Norman Podhoretz, who's famous for his moderation.

Norman Podhoretz

Let me try to formulate the question in somewhat more quizzical and problematic terms than Irving Kristol did in his tour d'horizon.

Some of us thought that the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 signified a major turn in American political culture. We thought that we were entering a new era characterized not so much by its increasing conservatism, either in the narrow or the broad sense, as by a new determination to reverse what was felt to be a precipitous and extremely dangerous decline in American power: American military power in relation to the Soviet Union, American economic power in relation to other countries, especially Japan, and even American moral power in relation to the standards of the past.

According to this view, which I myself held and developed, there was a new American majority out there (not a new Republican majority, which is a different matter), devoted to a last-ditch effort to halt the decline of American power and to find once again the secret that had made the country as great as it had been in living memory and that could, presumably, make it great again.

This is essentially what Ronald Reagan promised to try. That was the subliminal message of his campaign against Jimmy Carter, who was saying that a reversal of this decline was impossible, that decline was inevitable, that it had been mandated by the forces of history, and that it was up to us as a mature people to make peace with our new, relatively second-rate status. In rejecting that subliminal appeal and responding to the Reagan appeal--let us dare to be great again--the American people were, at least in the view of some of us, expressing a determination to get beyond the self-hatreds of the

Vietnam era in the area of politics, and the dislocations and turmoils of the various revolutions of the 1960's and 1970's in other areas of life not strictly governed by politics.

I think the question that everyone is asking now in one form or another, nearly four years later, as we face another election campaign, is whether this change was real or illusory. Was it merely a passing phenomenon, a transient mood, or did it reflect some deeper currents? Has American self-hatred really been replaced by a new nationalism or patriotism? Irving Kristol thinks it has. Has the country really become more conservative? Have we really recovered from the various traumas of the last ten or twenty years? Is there, in other words, a new consensus out there, for better or for worse? Or if not, is one beginning to take shape, and will it express itself in the coming presidential election? The second half of that question will be reserved for tomorrow morning.

James Q. Wilson

I'd like to speak to the question, has something changed? I will suggest that in some ways very little has changed, and make the argument, among other things, that the 1980 election was not a seismic event. Large changes may have occurred, but they did not reflect a powerful shift in the political terrain.

Regardless of the specific shortcomings of particular polls, one can learn something, I think, from looking at the long sweep of opinion to see to what extent opinion reflects continuity or change. This overview can best be taken by dividing opinion into two broad categories: matters about which the person being questioned has firsthand knowledge; and matters about which the person either knows very little or has secondhand knowledge.

In the first category, one can place the conditions of community life and the state of the economy as it is felt by the average citizen. With respect to these issues, I am struck by the great continuity of opinion among people in this country. This opinion is relatively insensitive to the character of the person

in office but holds that person responsible for doing something about the conditions of the economy and community life, whether or not the person in office can in fact do it.

In this area, the media have relatively little influence. The media do not tell us that there is unemployment or inflation or dislocations in certain industries. Citizens know these things firsthand, and the information is spread by word of mouth.

Opinion on these issues is also increasingly nationalized. The South is becoming much more like the North on these issues, though there are certain issues, including those of personal morality, on which there remains a distinctive Southern, and perhaps a distinctively rural, culture. The differences of opinion tend to be over means, not over ends. And these differences of opinion, to the extent a major fault-line can be detected, are associated increasingly with differences in race.

These opinions about matters we know firsthand have a clear effect on voting, and those who hold office must be attentive to the consequences of these views for their policies.

Someone once described the American voter as ideologically conservative, pragmatically liberal. I think that comes close to the truth. The public has become more conservative wholesale, but is at least as liberal retail as it ever was. The public is worried about the size of government and the deficit, and favors now, as it has favored for thirty or forty years, balanced budgets, even at the expense of higher taxes. But at the same time the public favors increased spending on virtually every significant domestic program, especially those that touch the conditions of the economy or of community life.

This leads to the problem that social scientists dignify with the phrase "circular majorities": namely, that it is always in the interests of politicians to campaign by advocating more for somebody, and rarely less for everybody, because people are more likely to vote on the basis of their retail view than their wholesale view (though their generally conservative wholesale stance is not entirely irrelevant to how they vote). And this leads to the chief policy problem for issues of this sort, and perhaps the chief

policy problem for the country's domestic affairs as a whole: how can we devise institutional or possibly constitutional arrangements to contain the tendency of democratic politics to increase the size of public expenditures, often in ways that, though supported by small numbers of persons, are opposed by majorities? How can we avoid, in short, becoming like Sweden?

Public opinion on foreign and military policy is characterized not by stability and continuity, but by great volatility. The volatility is of two sorts. The average citizen, I think, responds quickly, and on occasion in exaggerated fashion, to events; elites respond quickly and often in exaggerated fashion to ideas.

In the years preceding 1980 there was an increase in the proportion of the public who thought that we were spending too little on the military. Indeed, from 1971 to 1981 those who felt we were spending too little on defense rose from 11 percent to 51 percent. Between 1982 and 1983 that was virtually reversed; the proportion having this view fell from 51 percent to 14 percent. The public responds to events by rallying around the flag and supporting the President, if the event is an international crisis in which the United States takes an active role. But there is a limit as to how long that support can last.

Elites, on the other hand, respond to ideas as well as to events, but above all to ideas. And as Irving Kristol suggested, elites today are returning to a pre-World War II view of United States responsibilities in the world at large. The role of the media is extremely important with respect to how these ideas are shaped. That shaping goes on in large measure unconsciously and without an awareness of deliberate bias.

The effect of opinion on voting is uncertain. Voters will respond to a crisis, but they will also respond to the anticipation of a crisis. If there is a crisis, most voters will ordinarily rally around the President. But in anticipation of a crisis, they will retreat from the President. They will retreat from the possibility of American involvement in Central America. They will retreat from the possibility of America having to deploy forces in the Middle East. But if that deployment occurs, and if it occurs in a way which is at all broadly consistent with past involvements of American forces, it will be supported.

The difficulty with the fact that the average citizen is apprehensive about a crisis seen in embryo is that his fear can be magnified by the opinions circulated through the media and among elites. The extraordinary campaign now being carried on in the national press against our role in El Salvador and Nicaragua, with daily stories coming out of the (misnamed) House and Senate Intelligence Committees, faithfully reported in the Washington Post and the New York Times, is really without parallel, and it has increased people's sense of crisis.

This creates a situation of awkward incentives for the President. A calculating President, one concerned only for his short-term standing in public opinion, would minimize the anticipation and maximize the crisis. He would intervene early and decisively, and take advantage of the tendency to rally around the flag, rather than allow the anticipation of a crisis to drag on to the point where he loses the political capacity in Congress, and perhaps in his own administration, to carry out that intervention.

The statement I have just made is not a recommendation but a reflection on the difficulty of managing public affairs. It points up our chief policy problem, even greater than the problem of containing the tendency to bid up the budget by bidding for votes, namely, how can you lead a reluctant nation with a belief in isolationism in an era in which we have assumed worldwide responsibilities? I do not think any candidate of any party has an answer to that question.

Thomas Sowell

One of the things that has occupied my thinking in the past year is the fact that as you look at political issues which have no relation to each other--drug laws, military spending, busing--you repeatedly find the same people lining up on opposite sides. I wanted to find out why that is so.

What I've arrived at so far is that we are dealing with two sets of assumptions about human beings. I call them the constrained vision and the

unconstrained vision. If you have a very expansive view of what human beings are capable of, intellectually and morally, then many of the policies that we see today make sense. On the other hand, if your vision is one in which man is quite limited in what he knows and still more so in what he's likely to do on the basis of that knowledge, then you end up with another set of policies--even though in both cases you have the same information and the same level of intelligence applied to the information.

I'd like to talk just about what I consider to be the prevailing vision among intellectuals, which is a more or less unconstrained view of what human beings are capable of doing. In this view, if something is wrong, then it ought to be fixed because we are, by definition, capable of fixing it.

What epitomizes the difference between the two visions is the difference between the two words solution and tradeoff. Those who have the unconstrained vision of man often talk of solutions: what is the solution to this problem? I recall about a year ago, when I was addressing a group in New York, I said there really are no solutions, there are only tradeoffs. You can get a little more of this for a little less of that, but there are no solutions. And a lady in the audience said, "But the public demands solutions," which is undoubtedly true.

Much of the discussion of safety reflects the solutions approach. We must have nuclear safety, people say. Is nuclear power safe? Well, if nuclear power were safe, it would be the only safe thing on the face of this earth. We must have drug safety. That is, drugs must not have side effects, they must not injure people. But of course the lack of drugs has side effects, and those injure and kill people. So while we are waiting for the drugs to be certified as safe, people are dying. They're dying of safety.

The notion that there are male/female differences in the marketplace is, likewise, an offshoot of the idea that there are benefits without costs. I'm assuming that we still think of children as benefits. There are moments when all parents have doubts about that, but if children are benefits, clearly they also have costs. And clearly those costs will be reflected in the marketplace. If those persons who have children--I remember the phrase "pregnant persons" being

used--sustain some costs in terms of job continuity and other such career considerations, one would expect there would be some evidence of this in the marketplace--in income, promotions, and so on.

It is repeatedly said, for example, that a woman receives 59 percent of what a man receives for doing the same job. I also read a few weeks ago in the New York Times that a woman with the same education as a man receives what he receives for doing the same job. But neither of those statements is remotely true.

If you look at persons who do not have children and do not get married, then those who are female earn 91 percent of what those who are male receive. It is when you take into account those persons who have children that you find a vast disparity because, despite the verbal parallelism that we always insist upon, the behavioral reality is that women who have children earn less than women who do not have children, and men who are fathers earn more than men who are not.

None of this is terribly mysterious, given the difficulties of having more mouths to feed and so on. It's only when you lump all of these persons together that you get the magic 59 percent. When women who are living with their husbands average 25 percent of the income of men who are living with their wives, that does not mean that the women are living in poverty while the men are living in affluence. One of the many problems with the unconstrained vision is the practice of looking at figures as if they refer to some immediate reality when in fact they may refer to all sorts of things in this world.

One of the notions of causation that comes out of the unconstrained vision is the notion that certain things occur somehow. If one sees a photograph of slums, for example, alongside luxury high-rise apartments, then of course this becomes a moral statement. There is never a thought that, well, such things do not occur somehow, that there may be differences in the creation of wealth and therefore differences in the income from the wealth.

Another notion is that things that we're used to occur somehow. We needn't inquire as to how they came about, or whether there are preconditions for their coming about which have to be maintained and which then affect what policy we can have.

For example, much of the discussion of human rights in the past few years has proceeded as if we can simply insist that people with whom we have any kind of relationship or alliance meet some standards of democracy set here in the United States--that these standards be imposed somehow. There is no thought that most of the people who have ever lived on this planet have not lived under conditions such as those in the United States, that autocrats and dictators have in many countries been the norm for centuries. The argument cannot be made that had there not been a Shah in Iran things would have been much more democratic. We've been without a Shah in Iran for some time now and there is no noticeable movement in that direction. Moreover, if you look back through the history of Iran to find some democratic ruler, you will have to conclude, if you believe in the unconstrained vision, that Iran has just been unlucky time after time for centuries on end.

We also are becoming what I like to think of as an AIDS society. That is, we have the intellectual equivalent of acquired immune deficiency. The great word in this respect is nonjudgmental. We must be nonjudgmental. (If we really believed that, it would render the brain obsolete.) We must be nonjudgmental about teenage pregnancy. In fact our laws and the practices of our social workers reflect that line of thinking, and we have, very coincidentally, a much higher rate of teenage pregnancy than in the past.

Another consequence of the nonjudgmental approach is the ease with which the word censorship is used to describe the use of judgment: as to whether or not pornography should be made widely available; as to whether or not certain books should be made available to children by school authorities; as to whether we should bring up a whole generation on revisionist history. (Usually in the phrase "revisionist history," the word revisionist has been put in quotation marks. I think the word history should be put in quotation marks.) If one followed the anti-censorship argument to its logical conclusion, we would end up with a right to infiltrate, which is in fact a very widely practiced right in some areas.

One of the consequences of the unconstrained vision is that one sees the policies that ought to be followed as the only morally justified policies. Thus what would ordinarily be a difference of viewpoints is

seen as a moral crusade. Now in moral crusades, you do not worry whether you are playing by the Marquis of Queensbury rules. An example would be nature programs on TV. It is impossible to find a nature program on TV that is not also a political editorial for the environmental lobby, that does not tell you that the views of the environmental lobby are the only views that people ought to be permitted to have.

One of the problems with this approach is that it produces a wonderful sense of self-righteousness. The question is whether that self-righteousness is purchased at the expense of the long-run viability of society.

Ben J. Wattenberg

I propose to offer some survey-research data that I think give us an indicator of what may be bubbling beneath the surface of the American polity these days. I have all the problems with public-opinion polls that Irving Kristol has plus a few others. But I also think there is a realm of thought that could be described as "statistical impressionism." I think these numbers can give us a flavor of what is going on. What I'd like to do is to talk first about values and attitudes in a general sense and then about specific things that are going on.

The first set of numbers comes from what is called the self-anchoring, striving scale, a polling technique devised by the late Hadley Cantrell. It asks Americans to rank the condition of the country, on a scale of 1 to 10, in terms of the past, the present, and the future.

Up until the late 1970's, the sequence of numbers was always the same: the past would be, say, 4, the present 5, and the future 6. The numbers varied, but the present was always rated better than the past and the future better than the present. This was regarded as a typical sign of American optimism, and I think indeed it was.

In the late 1970's, when we had a lot of problems in this society, most particularly inflation, those numbers were turned on their head. The past came out

6, the present 5, and the future 4. In other words, yesterday was better than today and tomorrow is going to be even worse than today. That was when Patrick Caddell discovered a new watershed in American public opinion, and that was the origin of the "great malaise" speech of President Carter.

By 1983, malaise was dead; we were back to 4, 5, and 6. Today, the American population is quite optimistic. It also remains extremely patriotic.

I am working on a book now. It deals with what has happened in this country in the last dozen or so years and what the media have said has happened in this country in the last dozen or so years. The book is called The Good News Is the Bad News Is Wrong, and I want to cite a few numbers from it.

Eighty percent of the people in America say they are very proud to be an American. The number of people in Britain who feel the same way about their country is 55 percent; in Spain, 49 percent; in Italy, 41. The all-European average is 38, France is about 30, Japan is 30, Germany is 20.

Another important question is, would you be willing to fight for your country? Seventy-one percent of Americans said yes. The British were about 60 percent, the Spaniards 50, the all-European average was 40, the Japanese 20, and so on. So by any international ranking, we are not only patriotic, we are fairly tough-minded.

Finally, is America still internationalist? The question was, do you think the United States still has a special role to play in the world? It was asked in 1982 in the midst of a great recession. Eighty-one percent of the people in this country said yes.

We also have some opinions about various forms of government. The percentage of people who say Communism is the worst form of government has gone up substantially since the early 1970's. It is twice as high among college students today as it used to be.

With that quick sketch of American values in mind, we can take a look at a couple of specifics. James Q. Wilson said that the support of the American people for increased defense spending has dropped

sharply. That is partly true, as I read the data. It has dropped. But it has not dropped terribly sharply.

The way the question is asked is very interesting: should we spend more, should we spend the same, should we spend less? It's true that in the 1970's the spend-more line went from very low to very high; and while there has since been a decrease in the spend-more line, it's almost all gone to spend the same, not to spend less. But "the same" in 1984 is more than what we had in 1980. So by that index, when people say let's spend the same, they are really saying let's spend more.

On Ronald Reagan, there's a very interesting divergence of opinion. It is true, as some of the liberals say, that the American people think Reagan is moving the country closer to war. Forty-seven percent say that Reagan is moving us closer to war; 28 percent say closer to peace. At the same time, on the question, do you think President Reagan is being too tough in his dealings with the Soviet Union, not tough enough, or about right, 80 percent of the American people say that Reagan's dealings with the Soviet Union are about right or not tough enough. Only 10 percent of the people in the United States say Ronald Reagan is being too tough on the Soviets. And those numbers are roughly constant for women, blacks, Hispanics, and Democrats.

On Central America, there is an apparently confusing situation. A large majority of the people in the United States say that what's going on down there is very important. A large majority say it's more important than Vietnam was. And a large majority say don't spend any additional dollars or don't send any troops. So they're saying it is very important that there are Communists there, we've really got to pay a great deal of attention to that; and yet they don't particularly want to do anything about it. On the other hand, when the polling goes further and asks whether, if El Salvador were going to be taken over by the Communists, we should spend more money or send troops, the number of people who say yes begins to go up.

One of the best barometers that I know to judge American public opinion is the American political scene, because our politicians, particularly in the majority party, the Democratic party, are nothing if

not responsive. And one topic that has received a great deal of attention recently in the press is whether the so-called Scoop Jackson wing of the Democratic party has died. That question, it seems to me, is very much up in the air. The judgment of its death is entirely premature. For there is a lot of material that says the Democratic party is reflecting, albeit too slowly for my personal taste, the sorts of public opinion that I have been talking about.

For example, the Democratic standard-bearer in 1972, George McGovern, was for a 33 percent cut in defense spending. Jimmy Carter in 1976 campaigned on a cut of $5-7 billion in the defense budget. By 1980 Jimmy Carter was calling for a 3 percent real increase in defense spending. Walter Mondale and Gary Hart, both from the liberal wing of the Democratic party, being challenged in primaries by McGovern and Jesse Jackson, are for a 4 percent real increase in defense spending. John Glenn is for a 6 percent increase in defense spending.

Now that is a change. You can say it's not enough; I'd probably say it's not enough. But I don't think most coherent observers of the Democratic party five or six years ago would have said that the left-of-center candidates in the party would be going around saying we need a 4 percent real increase in defense spending.

In the House of Representatives, after Speaker Thomas O'Neill leaves, the three top Democrats, at least in the leadership and the foreign-policy wing, may well be Jim Wright, Tom Foley, and Dante Fascell. I could march a very long distance with them on a lot of issues. Among the liberals, there are people like Albert Gore and Les Aspin, who are willing to make intelligent and tough-minded compromises on things like the MX. Within the intellectual community in the Democratic party, there is a very strong and listened-to voice in the New Republic, which is stressing a tough-minded internationalism housed within the Democratic party. Among the columnists in Washington, there are people like Mark Shields and Michael Barone, who came from the Muskie wing of the Democratic party and who are making a great deal of sense these days on foreign-policy issues--including Central America. I think much of the Democratic activity on Capitol Hill about Central America is mean-spirited. Yet Mondale's position, the Democrats' position, on paper at least,

says we must be pro-Duarte, pro-the elected government in El Salvador.

Contrary to what Irving Kristol said--that there is a polarization, that our politics are splitting apart, that the Left is going to the left and the Right is going to the right--I would argue exactly the opposite. The Democratic party is moving toward the center, and at the same time, although no one seems to recognize it, the Republican party is moving to the center. Ronald Reagan is going around the country telling people how he, that great social democrat, is defending the safety net in America. Having campaigned against it for all his active political life, he is now saying: I prevented it from being cut. And when he takes these centrist steps, the conservatives complain, "Let Reagan be Reagan." Who's preventing Reagan from being Reagan? Reagan. He is making a centrist judgment of the nature of American public opinion, of where he's got to be in order to govern and to get re-elected.

I guess I probably agree with James Q. Wilson. I think we have a great deal more continuity than change in public opinion--not only in domestic issues, but in foreign-policy issues as well--and we live in a pretty healthy moment.

Chester E. Finn, Jr.

As the only member of the panel not currently resident on one coast or the other, I really have to talk about "out there"--the outback as it were. And I want to make a time-honored but nonetheless true point: over on the other side of the Potomac, much of what seems to reach obsessive proportions here on the Eastern seaboard either dwindles in size or is seen in somewhat different terms.

People in mid-Tennessee, where I live, seem to worry mainly about the affairs of their families, their communities, and perhaps their state. They worry about the economic condition in their immediate vicinity. They certainly worry about the condition of their own employers. Public-policy issues, as they surface in the newspapers of Nashville, concern

problems with the state prisons, the Governor's education-reform initiative, the legislature's attempt to do something about welfare standards in the state. The largest federal issue in mid-Tennessee lately has been who will be the next chairman of the TVA--a federal issue indeed, but one with considerable local implications.

The Nashville Tennesseean, the morning paper, reflects these priorities. National and international affairs rarely occupy more than a couple of columns in the whole newspaper. Of course, everybody sees the same television network news. But what you read over coffee at breakfast is different. People pay attention to the weather, to fishing in the various lakes and reservoirs, even to the ripening of the strawberries, which was the subject of a local newspaper article recently.

The recent presidential primary election was greeted by a big yawn. There were only national candidates and delegates on the ballot. There were no local or state candidates or issues on the primary ballot. I went to the polls at midday, and there were more election officials there than voters. There were a dozen or fifteen election officials hanging around and perhaps four voters. Something like 20 percent of Tennessee's registered voters turned out that day. There was a larger percentage of black voters, but they were the only ones moved by interest or enthusiasm to turn out. Overall, the presidential primary was not a big local issue.

This deemphasis on national and international matters that you run into outside the Northeastern corridor has some unfortunate consequences. For example, there appears to be barrelling through Congress this month something improperly known as the Civil Rights Act of 1984. I will wager that there aren't four people in Tennessee who are aware of this bill, let alone of the issues involved or what their consequences may be. Yet this bill, if passed, may well have all manner of dire and long-lasting consequences.

Thus important things may happen in Washington that people learn about only after the fact, except on those very rare issues that surface as matters of controversy on the nightly news. This has nothing to do with alienation or rejection or mass depression.

It's just that most people who are out of easy reach of the Washington Post have their interests and concerns organized into somewhat different priorities.

This is not to say that the homogenization of the culture isn't continuing in mid-Tennessee as everywhere else. Even though people don't yet sound alike everywhere in the country, they do dress alike and eat alike and watch the same television shows and movies and hear the same music and pay attention to the same athletic events. Speaking of athletic events, the Soviets' pull-out from the Olympics played in Nashville as a sports-page story, not as a foreign-policy one, and the sports editor pretty much said good riddance to them.

But I'm not at all complacent about things. I'm reasonably sanguine about the adult population of the United States in general. But the people between the ages of twenty and forty--the Yuppie generation, if you will--are another matter. There is a large, politically distinguishable difference between the old and the young middle-aged, and it's one that should concern us. It's worth considering how many of us have what you might call disciples between the ages of twenty and twenty-five who will grow up to hold roughly similar views and to hold positions of some influence ten or fifteen years from now. I think dealing with the Yuppie generation is a general problem already. However, I think the problem becomes much more severe as we look at what is happening to today's children.

It's possible that nationalism and patriotism may be generationally determined, that there may be an ascending curve of nationalism, patriotism, and conservatism that is directly proportionate to maturity. Certainly, there is nothing inherently wrong with today's children. Most of them will turn out in ways largely determined by who their parents are and the quality of the upbringing they are given at home. Nevertheless, we should bear several worrisome facts in mind.

First, of course, their parents are the Yuppies. Their parents are the Gary Hart constituency, not the Ronald Reagan constituency. It's also true that fewer of today's children are being born into relatively well-educated, well-organized, intact families. A larger proportion of today's children are being born

into families whose capacities for intellectual, political, and cultural nurturance are pretty skimpy. But much more disturbing to me is the fact that the major institutions outside the home that will influence the ideas, values, character, and politics of today's children are almost all dominated by ideas and values that people like us find troubling.

The three major institutions that will affect the average child are the media, the schools and colleges, and the churches. Yet all three sets of institutions have been, if not entirely radicalized, certainly turned into vehicles for the transmission of the most blurred and sometimes truly negative visions of America, democracy, and freedom. This transformation has occurred in all three of these sets of major institutions at the hands of the professionals who run them. That is why this outlook is very hard to alter. It is so deeply imbedded in these institutions.

This criticism cuts deeper than our usual critique of the schools for doing a lousy job of imparting skills and knowledge. That's true enough, and is true as well at the college level. But consider today's three-year-old who is rocked to sleep by a parent, a babysitter, or a day-care attendant with a reading of The Butter Battle Book by Dr. Seuss; who is entertained day after day and evening after evening by the offerings of network television, the principal source of external stimulus; who is formally educated in the average public school; who proceeds into the average state college; who is given his religion, if indeed he is given any, by the National Council of Churches; given his politics by the evening news, his school teachers, and perhaps his Sunday-school teacher; given his understanding of what the future holds by a contemporary American social-studies textbook. If we need a set of authentic worries to relieve today's generally upbeat atmosphere, let us worry about what today's three-year-old is going to think fifteen years hence.

I'm not going to take the time now to get into the even uglier underside of the same phenomenon, which is the intentional exacerbation by adults of children's fears, accompanied by the exploitation of their fears for political ends. This we are beginning to see as well, but that's a matter for another discussion.

Suzanne Garment

I'm going to be as depressing as Chester Finn.

I have been in Washington since 1980 in the company of a lot of working reporters, and I've been especially interested in what has happened to them since the 1980 election. It goes without saying that most of these journalists are liberals, but I've found that the election of Reagan was more troubling to them than you might expect.

They were not free simply to adopt a hostile posture towards Ronald Reagan. For one thing, they have about them a pose of objectivity, and that imposes real constraints on them. They can't walk around the newsroom expressing the hostility they might feel to some of the candidates and officials that they cover.

For another thing, they are members not only of a journalistic culture, but of the modern adversary journalistic culture. They have come to consider themselves the enemies of all governors. This means that they can't identify themselves too closely with the liberal critics of Reagan inside the government, any more than they can simply express their animus towards Reagan.

These people are also democrats in the very specific sense that they feel they must express piety towards the verdict of the people in an election. This has put another limitation on them in their coverage of the present administration.

More than democrats, they are populists of the Left. This is another reason why they feel somewhat bound to take account of what ordinary people seem to be thinking.

Yet another problem for them in their work is that they do have a cult of personality. They're very heavily influenced in their reportage by how charmed they are by a particular politician they're covering.

And finally, whatever their personal feelings towards the people they're covering, they always need access. This means there are certain limits on the hostility they can express, and certain lies they have

to tell if they want to be talked to at all the second time.

All of this has led to certain complications in the coverage the print media have given to the administration. On the one hand, there have been distinctly favorable aspects of this coverage. Reagan has, as they often tell us, gotten a very good press in a personal sense. Some reporters have tried to explore the Reagan stupidity theme, but they have not managed to make this a major one. The Reagan White House has gotten somewhat less inquiry into its internal operations than past administrations have, even though the internal politics of this White House are perhaps nastier than those of previous Republican administrations.

These favorable aspects aside, two things have happened to the media coverage of politics that go beyond the personal views of reporters. One is that the Watergate view of the news has become institutionalized. Reporters no longer know how to cover a scandal in any terms other than those of Watergate: that is, terms that include supposition about a major crisis for the Constitution or a major attempt to undermine the Constitution; the pursuit by reporters of every possible lead; and the writing of every possible suspicion no matter how reasonable they think these suspicions will turn out to be.

In the case of Edwin Meese, who is the target of one of the scandal-reporting campaigns now, it's very clear that most of the Washington establishment does not feel very bloodthirsty toward him. He has friends in Washington in both parties. Most people think he is a nice man. Most people believe that whatever mistakes he has made have been relatively minor. And none of this makes any difference to the media reporting of events because reporters on the beat feel absolutely bound to pursue every lead, to voice every criticism, not simply because of their ideology, but because they are afraid of the bad journalistic reputation they might acquire if they treated a possible scandal any other way.

There has also been an institutionalization of a certain kind of foreign-policy reporting. That is, the Vietnam model has been institutionalized just as the Watergate model has been. The people reporting on Central America are, beyond any conscious ideology

they might have, incapable of reporting on events there except in the Vietnam mode: that is, except with a very acute awareness, first, of how much Central America is a quagmire whose politics we do not understand, and second, of rising public and congressional protest against executive-branch attempts to wage its policy unilaterally.

These models are no longer questions of ideology, though certainly they started as such. They have become part of the day to day journalistic operational codes. They are what journalists are taught in their conversations with one another around the newsroom. They are part of the pieces that journalists are taught to admire. So if you ask some of these people about their particular ideological leanings, they may very honestly these days claim themselves to be innocent of bias. But since these cultural biases have now been incorporated into the mores of the profession, it's going to be very hard to extricate them, much harder than if all you had to do was to answer wrong ideology with frontal argument.

Norman Podhoretz

Let me try to summarize what we've heard in rather more organized terms than we necessarily heard it in these individual presentations. I think what we've been told, in answer to the question of what's going on out there, does fall into an organized pattern.

James Q. Wilson and Ben Wattenberg believe that there is a good deal more continuity in the political culture than the other speakers. Ben Wattenberg is optimistic about the features of that continuity. James Q. Wilson, being a scrupulous social scientist, did not indicate whether he was happy or unhappy about the current state of affairs. But I would guess that he is less optimistic than Ben Wattenberg. In any case, we do have one view that things have not changed all that radically, that the changes others see are mainly a matter of atmospherics, and that they have no serious lasting significance, either for policy, whether domestic or foreign, or for the underlying values of the people out there.

What we got from Thomas Sowell, Chester Finn, and Suzanne Garment was, at least implicitly, a stress on that sector of the American people--some would call it the elites or the educated class or the new class--where change seems most evident. The views of this articulate class seem to bear no relation whatever to the numbers cited by Ben Wattenberg. It's as though we lived in a totally schizophrenic world in which the data, such as can be measured by techniques of survey research, say the reality is one thing and virtually everything we hear and read tells us the reality is something different.

All three of these speakers have emphasized what perhaps we ought to call the world of ideas, the world of interpretations of reality. Although it's not clear to me whether Thomas Sowell meant to be saying that the unconstrained view--of which he takes a dim view--is confined to the articulate classes, my guess is that it is not. In any case, he does not feel particularly optimistic about the sense of life expressed in the articulations that we are all exposed to in the press, in books, in movies, and so on.

Similarly, and perhaps even more gloomily, with Chester Finn and Suzanne Garment. Chester Finn, in a way seeming to agree with Ben Wattenberg, told us what's going on in the real America on the basis of what he sees around him and reads in the Nashville Tennesseean. Nevertheless, his own view of what is important is reflected in his fears of the kind of education to which the young are being subjected, not only in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Berkeley, California, and Manhattan, but also, evidently, in Nashville, Tennessee, and points West and South. That's what matters to him most--the process through which the forces of the recent past are capturing the next generation.

Suzanne Garment's analysis tells us that what used to be an ideological point of view among journalists has now become, through some sort of epistemological transformation, a set of axioms in that profession. These axioms are virtually impossible to cope with, and again, they cast doubt on the realities that Ben Wattenberg's numbers conjure up.

What really is the reality? Is it what the numbers in Ben Wattenberg's studies tell us, or is it the culture described and anatomized by Suzanne

Garment, Chester Finn, and Thomas Sowell? What is decisive? Is it the ideas that we as an organization are most committed to dealing with, or is it the inarticulate premises reflected in the behavior of large numbers of Americans, if indeed that behavior is accurately described by the studies? I hope that this disagreement will be more fully explored this afternoon.

LUNCHEON ADDRESS

OWEN HARRIES

Introduction

Neal Kozodoy*

In 1983, Owen Harries completed a two-year term of service as the Ambassador of Australia to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. He is, therefore, a man whose recent adventures must inevitably strike a familiar sounding note--to anyone, that is, who has seen the movie Escape from Alcatraz. For Mr. Harries has not only extricated himself from that prison-house of Western souls, but he has performed the extraordinary and possibly unprecedented feat of extricating himself with his wit and sanity and analytic powers miraculously unimpaired.

Why a man of Mr. Harries's stature and accomplishments and intellectual graces--one, it seems important to add, who had been a pilot officer in the Royal Air Force--should have ended up receiving a sentence of hard labor at UNESCO is something of a mystery. In Australia, after all, he had enjoyed a distinguished career in public service. Just prior to his dispatch to UNESCO headquarters in Paris, he was senior adviser and principal speechwriter to Malcolm Fraser, then Australia's Prime Minister. Before

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that he served as the head of policy planning in the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs. Still earlier, he made his living as a professor of political science, which is not yet (though perhaps it ought to be) a punishable offense.

But if the conditions of Mr. Harries's internment in Paris must remain somewhat obscure, the benefits that have accrued to all of us from his period of service there are anything but. It would undoubtedly be going too far to credit him personally with the expulsion from France of twelve UNESCO employees who happened to be KGB agents, but it would not be going far at all to say that the general clearing of the air that has taken place in Western thinking about UNESCO, the at least partial expulsion from the mind of false ideas and influences, owes a very great deal to his example. Both within the precincts of UNESCO itself and in his writings and public statements since his liberation, he has been instrumental in focusing attention on the extent to which this agency has traduced its original purposes and--even more significantly--on the extent to which, at UNESCO and at other international forums, the Western democratic nations have actually maneuvered themselves into subsidizing the subversion of democratic values, the poisoning of democratic language, and the corruption of democratic freedoms.

Another, related area in which Mr. Harries has contributed to the dispelling of false ideas has to do with the practice and the rhetoric of great-power diplomacy. In the pages of Commentary, Foreign Affairs, The American Scholar, and elsewhere, he has quite pitilessly exposed the strategems, both conscious and unconscious, by which Western statesmen manage to persuade themselves that the policies they happen to be pursuing at the moment, usually either by necessity or by accident, are founded on a solid base of political wisdom. He is particularly coruscating on the optimistic disguises adopted by Western European statesmen and intellectuals to mask what is in reality a posture of accommodation and even appeasement in the face of superior Soviet power. (And not just Soviet power. As one American remarked apropos the recent episode at the Embassy of Libya in London, "When the Europeans aren't bending over all the way backward, they seem to be bending over all the way forward." But then, who are we to talk?)

Having made good his escape from Alcatraz, Mr. Harries now basks in the diplomats' equivalent of Rio, the Heritage Foundation, where he is a John M. Olin Fellow in Political Economy.

Europe and America: 1984

Owen Harries

I must confess that I have serious doubts about whether I can usefully contribute to the subject of this conference--the state of the nation. Not because I have lived in the United States for only a short period--in principle, I accept that a fresh and innocent eye can be an advantage--but because during my time here I have hardly been outside the Washington beltway and New York.

There is a reason for this. During my stay I have been haunted by a previous incarnation. Trapped by exceptional circumstance, urged on by the Heritage Foundation and by individuals who are otherwise decent and friendly, I've been obliged to become what would in normal times be that most absurd and improbable of things--a resident expert on UNESCO. As such I've been more preoccupied with UNESCO boss M'Bow than Democrat hopeful Mondale, pointed more towards Paris than Chicago or Dallas. So I have only a very limited experience or knowledge to draw on.

In the circumstances, it seems to me that the only comparative advantage I enjoy in confronting this formidable audience (and all neo-conservatives are under a moral obligation to exploit comparative advantages) is that I have happened to live in three different parts of the Western world in the last five years: in Australia, Western Europe, and now in America. They say that comparisons are invidious; but they can also be illuminating and are in any case unavoidable. So I will approach the question of the state of the American nation obliquely by talking about other nations--mainly, for reasons of brevity, relevance, and delicacy, those of Western Europe rather than Australia.

First, let it be said that in some important ways the life lived in Western Europe (and Australia) is about as good as is lived anywhere on this earth, not only in material terms, but in terms of common decency, of law-abidingness and justice, of compassion, of civility in conducting public affairs, of creativity in at least some of the arts and sciences. These are not negligible qualities and in any moral and political bookkeeping they deserve to be given their full weight. In some of these respects, indeed, it seems to me that these communities score better than the United States.

That having been said, however, the most important thing remains to be said: which is that both Australia and Western Europe are, have become, communities without dreams, and as such have a certain emptiness at the core. If "dreams" is too vague or poetic a term, substitute, according to your taste, an "ultimate sense of purpose," a "sustaining myth," or an "operational ideal." In any case, they have no convincing claim to have an answer to that question which Irving Kristol maintains is the key one of our time: "Who owns the future?"--nor, I would add, to the further questions: "What is required of us? And why?"

Historically, the three sources of such dreams, and of the answers to such questions, have been religion and, laterally, the nation and science. In Australia and Western Europe, these do not work anymore.

In Europe all three were once very powerful generators of a sense of purpose and obligation. But the decline and exhaustion have been precipitate. In Protestant northern Europe, theology has been debased to a kind of damp sociology, and religion to a mixture of social work and adult education.

I was given poignant evidence of what this means in practice during a recent visit to my country of origin--Wales--which, as recently as forty years ago, was a stronghold of religious nonconformity: in which the chapels were the core of the community, with a dominating moral authority and a decisive role in nearly all aspects of life. It has all changed: run-down, neglected chapels; pitifully small congregations composed of the very young and the very old; empty manses; and irrelevance to the life of the

community. An even more striking case is that of the Netherlands--until recently a stronghold of Christian, bourgeois rectitude, now, in a decade or two, transformed into the drug and pornography capital of Europe and the model of reckless and profligate welfarism. Things are probably not so bad in Catholic Europe, but, after two decades of self-destructive actions on the part of the Catholic Church, they are not so good either.

As far as the decline of nationalism--and patriotism--is concerned, that has been just as rapid, though more obviously explicable. Basically, I believe the explanation is that two terrible wars have leached nationalism of its appeal, have drained away its accummulated moral capital and its vitality. Traveling through northeastern France and seeing those hundreds and hundreds of neat military cemeteries brings it home. I doubt whether anyone has put it better in a brief compass than F. Scott Fitzgerald in Tender Is the Night. You may remember that in that novel he has Dick Diver looking out over the First World War battlefield of the Somme and saying: "See that little stream--we could walk to it in two minutes. It took the British a whole month to walk to it--a whole empire walking very slowly, dying in front and pushing forward behind. And another empire walked backwards a few inches a day. . . . This western-front business couldn't be done again, not for a long time. . . . This took religion and years of plenty and tremendous sureties and the exact relation that existed between the classes. . . . You had to have a whole-souled sentimental equipment going back further than you could remember. You had to remember Christmas, and post-cards of the Crown Prince and his fiancee, and little cafes in Valence and beer gardens in Unter den Linden and weddings at the mairie, and going to the Derby, and your grandfather's whiskers."

That gets it about right--and that, remember, was written before the second of those great European wars. Those "tremendous sureties," that "whole-souled sentimental equipment" do not exist anymore. As patriotism has declined, so have the capacity and the instinct to behave as great powers. They have been replaced by a strange mixture of resigned fatalism and irresponsible complacency, improbably disguised as superior sophistication.

What of science, the third historic source of dreams and purpose? Here again the transformation has been thorough and incredibly rapid. It is, after all, only a generation or two ago--remember H. G. Wells and the vast public that responded to him--that science was seen throughout the Western world as the begetter of a golden future. Now, in Europe, science is the enemy: the creator of apocalyptic weapons, the despoiler of the environment and of the organic community, the destroyer of jobs and established industries. The scientist in the white coat is now a demon, not an angel. The characteristic popular responses to science in Western Europe today are the mass protest demonstration and the Luddite strike. At the same time, of course, those things whose production requires science and technology are in increasing demand: the connection between cause and effect is simply denied. Or as Ortega y Gasset put it in his remarkably prescient book, The Revolt of the Masses:

> . . . [T]hey do not see, beyond the benefits of civilization, marvels of invention and construction which can only be maintained by great effort and foresight; they imagine that their role is limited to demanding those benefits peremptorily as if they were natural rights. In the disturbances caused by scarcity of food, the mob goes in search of bread, and the means it employs is generally to wreck the bakeries.

All this--let us for the sake of brevity simply call it a loss of purpose--it should be remembered, has happened to Europe at the same time that it was losing power and authority at an unprecedented rate. What was cause and what was effect, I'm not sure. Ortega, as usual, is, and I will quote him once again (remember he was writing in 1930, when Europe still dominated the world): "It is only the illusion of rule, and the discipline of responsibility which it entails, that can keep Western minds in tension. Science, art, technique, and all the rest live on the tonic atmosphere created by the consciousness of authority. If that is lacking, the European will gradually become degraded. Minds will no longer have that radical faith in themselves which impels them . . . towards the capture of great new ideas in every order of life. The European will inevitably become a day-to-day man." That is very persuasive, especially written before the event--and that phrase "day-to-day

man" encapsulates much of what I am trying to convey. But I suspect that it was less a one-way thing--loss of authority, leading to loss of creativity--and more a complex interaction of decline in both areas.

What is the relevance of all this to the state of America today? From the kinds of criticisms that some conservatives make of contemporary America, I take it that some of you will consider that it applies as much to this country as it does to Europe; or if not as much, then nearly as much; or if not yet, then probably that it will tomorrow. And the last of these views may yet turn out to be right.

Clearly many of the tendencies and forces evident in Europe are present in significant strength in this country. There are, in this sense, many Europeans in America. And yet, coming immediately from one environment to the other, one is struck more by the differences than by the similarities; by the strength of the countervailing forces in the United States, rather than by their comparative weakness, as one is in Europe. The mix is different. And so are the historical circumstances--for one thing the United States has the example of Europe before it, and that is an important advantage; for another, power and authority have not flowed away from America but to it, and the "discipline of authority" is still a reality here.

In a recent Washington Times, Jeffrey Hart had an article titled, "Are We a Secular Nation?" His answer was a firm no, but for someone recently arrived from Europe the only surprise was that the question should be posed. America seems so obviously the last Western country in which religion is a serious force: in which politicians with very sensitive antennae do not feel embarrassed at referring to God in their public utterances--but, indeed, feel obliged to make such references regularly; in which public lunches and dinners are routinely prefaced by a grace; in which, according to all the polls, belief in God and in an afterlife, and church attendance, are widespread; and in which one regularly comes into contact with individuals for whom religious belief is clearly a vital force in their lives. Now in the context in which I am talking, I obviously think this is a very desirable state of affairs. But, if I may digress slightly for a minute, as someone who is personally both agnostic and strongly anti-Communist, I also find

that it has a slightly worrying side, politically. For there is evident a tendency on the part of the religious to appropriate political virtue to themselves. Very soon after arriving in America, I had conversations with two very distinguished intellectuals--both of whom happen to be here today and both of whom are good friends--in which each separately expressed surprise that I could hold the political views I did as a nonbeliever. One of them even said, or got very close to saying, that I must really believe without realizing that I did.

A few months later there was a very moving meeting held at the Heritage Foundation to honor the memory of Whittaker Chambers. During the meeting one of the speakers, clearly with the general approval of the audience, referred to Chambers's view that the choice we face is: God or Communism. If one goes back to Chambers's "Letter to My Children" one sees, indeed, that this is what he believed. It is true that at one point he uses the dichotomy "Communism and Freedom," and at another, "God or Man." But it is also clear that he equates freedom with acceptance of God, and "Man"--i.e., the rejection of God--with Communism.

This is to say, at best, that the non-religious cannot be effectively against Communism; and, at worst, that they are--objectively, so to speak--on the side of Communism. It seems to me that what Chambers is saying must mean one or the other, or both, of these things, or it means nothing. It also seems to me that whichever of these meanings is given to what he is saying, it is false, and outrageously so. I have been sufficiently moved to think of composing a world team of anti-Communist non-believers. In cricketing terms, Arthur Koestler and George Orwell would open the batting and Sidney Hook would pad up to go in at first-wicket-down: a formidable opening line-up, as well as a pleasing image.

Apart from being false, it also seems to me to be dangerous and foolish--in that opposing Communism effectively is difficult enough, and the forces engaged in doing so are weak enough already, without engaging in any sort of religious test.

To return to my main theme, what is true of religion in America is also true of patriotism. That, too, in the sense both of simple love of country and

of a political commitment to it and its central institutions seems stronger here than in other Western countries. This is part of what Europeans mean when they speak of American innocence. This impression is supported by poll data: there is more popular confidence in America in all the major institutions of the country than there is in Europe (with the one interesting exception of the legal system).

I am not sure what the texture of this patriotism is--what stress it can bear, what durability it has, or how it is likely to translate into policy. I note that there are differences among conservatives on some of these questions. Irving Kristol seems confident that it can provide the basis for a robust, outward-looking unilateralism in American foreign policy. Norman Podhoretz is worried that, in certain circumstances, it could turn inward and fuel a new isolationism. When people with their feel for the American pulse disagree, I am not going to express an opinion. I simply note that the strength of patriotism in this country is palpably of a different order than in Western Europe and that this provides a basis on which to construct and implement foreign policy which no longer exists in Europe.

This might be the place to make the few very brief comments I want to make about the foreign policy of the Reagan administration. I would sum it up this way: when what has been at issue is character, it has done rather well (witness the determination in getting the Pershing missile installed in Europe; witness the willingness to take the flak over Nicaragua). But when the issues call for ideological or symbolic skill, for the challenging of the existing mindset, for conceiving and implementing far-reaching changes imaginatively, it has done rather badly. NATO is still regarded as sacrosanct. The state of negotiations on arms control is still accepted as a crucial measurement of East-West relations. The proposition that friction or coolness in relations with Moscow is self-evidently a sign of failure is not contested, as it should be.

There have been a few exceptions to this generalization: Grenada; much of Jeane Kirkpatrick's work in the UN; and the decision to withdraw from UNESCO. But they have been few, and even then have often not been fully developed and exploited. For example, the UNESCO decision, which is pregnant with symbolic and

ideological significance, has not been referred to in a single public statement by a single senior member of the administration since it was made.

Why these failures? Is it, as some maintain, a paucity of able people capable of implementing policy changes? Is it that the administration lacks the courage of its convictions? Or is it, indeed, that in the last resort it lacks the convictions themselves? This is not the time to pursue these questions, but they are important ones which are worthy of consideration.

As I near the end of this talk, I would like to mention two things that have surprised me since I came to this country. The first is really quite astonishing for someone of my recent background. It is that during the seven months I have lived here, my life has not been disrupted for a single day by a strike or any other form of industrial dispute. Now, I am prepared to concede immediately that an element of luck is involved here; I know that you do have strikes and that they are sometimes serious, especially when contracts are being negotiated.

But the point is that such luck would be simply inconceivable in contemporary Australia or Europe. Australia is currently enjoying its best period of industrial relations in fifteen years. Yet last month it was experiencing a national strike of doctors, the main mining town--Broken Hill--was at a complete standstill because of strikes, and it was predicted that a demarcation dispute was about to throw the building-construction industry into chaos for the second time in eighteen months.

In my year and a half in Paris, strikes and the accompanying street-theater of bonfires in the boulevards, baton charges, and tear-gas clouds were an accepted part of the rich pageantry of contemporary French socialism.

I do not know what to make of this, except to make the obvious but important point that it seems to indicate that unions in America have less power, or a different role--or both. More than any other institution, trade unions are responsible for the element of rigidity, the failure to adapt, in other Western countries. They have become petrifying institutions. The fact that one is strikingly aware of a greater

flexibility and adaptability in the United States in responding to problems may then have much to do with the different character of these key institutions in the United States.

Last, a word about the much vaunted "new class," the internal adversary for conservatives in contemporary America.

I believe that those who have identified and so brilliantly described this phenomenon have done us all a service. Their only tactical mistake, perhaps, was to make it a gift of the adjective "new," a term of approbation in America--especially as, while this phenomenon owes its emergence to recent social, technical, and cultural developments, essential components of its ideological position are so old: statism at home and a kind of toothless, guilty internationalism abroad.

Nevertheless, there is no doubt that it is a formidable opponent. Moreover, as the processes which move us toward the post-industrial world, and which create and sustain this class, are furthest advanced in the United States, it is more fully developed and intrinsically powerful here than anywhere else in the Western world. Its real strength derives not from the force of its ideas or from the degree of popular support it has--I think most of the evidence is that its views are very atypical--but from the fact that it is strategically placed to have a direct influence on decision-makers.

But even with respect to the "new class," and despite its undoubted strength, things do not seem to me to be as bad in America as in the rest of the Western world. First, it meets with a much more robust counterattack here, the countervailing forces are much more powerful, organized, and active. It is subjected to intense and effective scrutiny, exposure, and criticism. (As a timely example of what I mean, let me draw to your attention a paper just prepared for the Republican Study Committee by Frank Gregorsky on liberal views on foreign policy--a rich and eminently quotable compendium of "new class" fatuity.) The "new class" is more inhibited, more constrained, more obliged at least to go through the motions of being fair in this country than it is elsewhere. And I suspect that it is being pegged back, rather than growing in boldness.

Secondly, in one respect the "new class" is less advantageously placed structurally in the United States than it is elsewhere. It is not organically and institutionally linked, as are its counterparts in other Western countries, to mass left-wing or radical parties, or to ideologically politicized trade unions. Its links with the old working class, and its claim on the members of that class, are, therefore, much weaker. In other Western countries there is a perversely unnatural alliance by which the blue-collar workers, despite their profound conservatism, are delivered in their millions, by institutions to which they are faithful, to support "new-class" causes; in the United States they are still Ronald Reagan's natural constituency.

In closing I recall that when I wrote a piece not long ago making the same kind of comparison between Europe and America with respect to foreign policy, some Americans responded with an indignant insistence that I had got it wrong and that things were at least as bad here as they are there.

I suspect that what I have said on this occasion may evoke a similar reaction. Conservatives relish their pessimism, cherish the conviction that things are going to pot, and function best when they feel embattled. So, to combat any feeling of depression that my cheerfulness may cause--and also to guard against being accused of "best-case thinking"--let me stress that I have been talking in comparative, not absolute, terms. I have been saying no more than that things seem to me to be considerably better in America than in Europe--where they are very bad indeed.

I hope that that will make it easier to accept.

DISCUSSION

Norman Podhoretz: We are going to throw the discussion open to comments and questions from the floor. Before we do, though, I want to apologize for a misstatement I was guilty of this morning in my summary of

James Q. Wilson's position. I think that I ought to give him an opportunity to correct the gross and indiscriminate way in which I included him in a large generalization about the patterns of disagreement on the panel.

James Q. Wilson: This is a matter of little consequence save for the fact that we're all interested in placing people as to whether they are upbeat or downbeat about the future. I want to make it clear that I am midbeat. Norman Podhoretz and Laurence Silberman, among others, are always accusing me of having the central failing of never dropping the other shoe. My reason for that is that I can never find the shoe when I need it, and when I drop it it's lost in the clatter of other shoes already having hit the floor.

What I want to say is parallel to what Owen Harries said at lunch today. He remarked, as a visitor to this country, that perhaps Americans get excessively gloomy about their state of affairs; if you compare it to Britain's, things look a bit more optimistic. I had the same experience in reverse.

I was invited to Australia to give a lecture on crime. I discovered when I got there that I had been summoned because Australians thought they had a serious crime wave and wanted to know from an American expert what to do about it. I looked around and concluded that Australia did not have anything that could be called a crime wave. When I said so, my audience became indignant. It was as if I had insulted their national honor by implying that Australia was less than a developed nation for not having that mark of civilization, brutality in the streets.

My view is that our political order works surprisingly well on those domestic issues, especially economic issues, where the public has some reasonable standard for judging the state of affairs and a reasonably effective mechanism for making its views known. We do not need to abuse ourselves about the plight of industrial or economic America with all its difficulties. Compared to most other nations, we are in very good shape, save for one problem: namely, the long-term possibility that the bidding for votes will,

absent some institutional or constitutional barrier, lead to a level of expenditure which can no longer be sustained politically or economically.

I am much more pessimistic with respect to foreign affairs, not because I think there is an institutional or constitutional defect, but because, unlike my friend Ben Wattenberg, I detect the locus of governing in the world of ideas. And in that world of ideas I detect a mood hostile to those policies and postures which the United States ought to have if it is to discharge its international responsibilities effectively. I can think of no way to correct the problem, save to subscribe to those few journals in which views that I support are reflected, and where my subscription makes a difference because there are so few of us.

Norman Podhoretz: In other words, we are a lonely crowd.

John Podhoretz:* I would like to enter something of a protest, and to introduce my protest, I'd like to tell a little story.

I grew up on the upper West Side of Manhattan, spent my boyhood and adolescence there, and when I was eighteen, I went to the University of Chicago. There I came upon people who were Republicans, and I realized with some shock that, aside from Irving Kristol, I had never met anyone who called himself a Republican in my entire life.

I think that the discussion this morning was predicated more on the kind of opinions that are expressed in places where people do not have an opportunity to meet anyone who calls himself a Republican than in the country at large, where there are a great many Republicans. This means the media, in which I work; it means the schools that I attended; it means all sorts of things. I think the basic problem is that one cannot understand the United States of America if one reads newspapers, watches television, or follows opinion polls.

*Columnist, Washington Times.

However, there is a very easy way for us to understand the United States of America. We are all Americans. As Americans, we have a better sense of what goes on in this country than we can be taught. We have been intimidated into thinking that we must make a thorough sociological study of things to know what people are really thinking and saying. I don't think that's the case. We all can sense that Ronald Reagan is more in tune with the times than Walter Mondale is, without any statistical evidence. I think we have an ear for this. This is our country. We are voters.

There are enormous numbers of people out there who do not read the Washington Post or the New York Times; who do not take their political wisdom from ABC News, NBC News, and CBS News; who make their minds up not on the basis of ideology, but on the basis of what they feel their interests are. V. O. Key said the American electorate is not stupid. It votes how it votes for very specific reasons. That is why this is a successful democracy.

I think that if we're going to talk about what is going on out there, we have to do so without a smoke screen--an academic smoke screen, a media smoke screen--through which we observe the country. We are observers of it simply by virtue of the fact that we live here.

Norman Podhoretz: Any response to that protest from the world of the intuitive?

Ben J. Wattenberg: The views John Podhoretz ascribes to Republicans are by no means exclusively Republican. In fact, what he said is a pretty good description of what mainstream Democrats in this country believe. But to know that, you have to read the public-opinion polls. And if Reagan wins, it will be because the people John Podhoretz is intuiting about--most of whom are Democrats--feel the way he described.

Chris K. Olander:* Several of the panelists mentioned the national will--some as optimists, some as pessimists--and I'd like to read a short quotation from Richard Nixon's Real Peace:

> National will involves far more than readiness to use military power, whether nuclear or conventional. It includes a readiness to allocate the resources necessary to maintain that power. It includes a clear view of where the dangers lie and what kinds of responses are necessary to meet those dangers. It includes also a basic, crystalline faith that the United States is on the right side of the struggle, and that what we represent in the world is worth defending.

Since I don't expect anyone to disagree with that, I would just like to ask the panel: what is your long-term assessment of the state of our national will?

Thomas Sowell: I would say it's like the Grand Canyon. It's very solid, but it can be worn away by water over a long enough period of time. And I think there's an awful lot of water coming over the dam.

Ben J. Wattenberg: There's an awful lot of canyon.

James Q. Wilson: I'm not sure one can respond to that. It goes back to my earlier proposition, whose will are we speaking of? I don't doubt for a moment the average American's belief in the rightness of his country in general and in the desirability of its sustaining itself and maintaining its allies. But that is not the basis on which foreign-policy decisions, in the near term, are made. They are made by others who do not necessarily share those views. Since they are less than the nation, we're not talking about the national will, we're talking about the will of a few people. And that will has changed throughout the history of our country, almost from generation to

*J. M. Foundation.

generation. The present circumstance is no different from the nineteenth century in which we moved from a sense of manifest destiny to a sense of isolationism almost overnight. The public's will didn't change at all during this time. But there was an important change in the views of opinion-makers and opinion leaders.

Suzanne Garment: I have roughly the same sense of it. In the case of foreign policy especially, there is a huge disjunction between the national will and the agenda that is set by an elite. The sad thing is that the content of the agenda can have a real and deleterious effect on the national will.

Robert Brand:* One phrase that really irritates me is "superpower rivalry." The situation we are facing in the world is not a rivalry between two superpowers. It's a rivalry between a Communist dictatorship, with its satraps and satellites, and a group of democratic societies who have voluntarily banded together to oppose the expansion of the Soviet bloc.

Irving Kristol talked about the UN effort in Korea in 1950 as an example of how things could be done internationally at one time. At that time the UN was dominated by the votes of the democratic societies. It is no longer so. Owen Harries has described the various problems which the democratic countries have in common. They suffer from a lack of patriotism. They suffer from a lack of traditional values. But they still have open societies in common. They have the potential to restore their faith in the idea of democracy.

How are we going to tap the potential of the democratic societies in Western Europe, in North America, and in the Western Pacific? Do conservatives have the courage and the imagination to lead the parade?

*Formerly State Department; Australian Studies Center, Penn State University.

Ben J. Wattenberg: I think the free peoples of the world have that courage. But I object to the idea that it is only conservatives who are concerned with the maintenance of human liberty and human dignity on this planet. That is simply not correct. And it does not serve the conservative movement well to characterize liberals as anti-freedom.

Irving Kristol: I'd like to make several points. First, the term anti-Communist has been used. I do not describe myself as an anti-Communist. I'm pro-bourgeois, pro-democratic, pro-capitalist. It follows, of course, that I am anti-Communist. But Ben Wattenberg is right. A lot of liberals are anti-Communist. All the people who work at CBS are anti-Communist. They're just not pro-democratic or pro-bourgeois or pro-capitalist.

I therefore think it is very important to emphasize the positive. I also think it's important to be upbeat because the question of who owns the future is the question. Owen Harries gave us his cricket team, but with the exception of Sidney Hook, it's not my team. I have great respect for Arthur Koestler, who was a good friend. I have great respect for George Orwell. We've learned much from them. But they were the most pessimistic political writers of our generation. They are not the kind of writers who can inspire young people to go out and shape the world. They were people who had largely given up.

The third point is crucial: how can we do this, how can we do that? I agree with John Podhoretz. I feel that I know the American people, just as he feels he knows the American people. If you had taken a public-opinion poll asking people whether they would favor the invasion of Grenada, what would have been the results? Probably 80 percent would have said they were against it. But Reagan did invade Grenada and he was supported by 90 percent of the people--to the absolute astonishment of the news media.

None of these problems of foreign policy is going to be solved without leadership. Leadership shapes opinion. Leadership creates opinion. If I were President of the United States, my first order would be: no pollster allowed in the White House because polls make leaders into followers. My criticism of

Ronald Reagan is that he hasn't done the things a leader should do in shaping opinion on foreign policy. Owen Harries mentioned this at lunch. He hasn't made an issue of UNESCO. He hasn't made an issue of the United Nations. And he hasn't done it because the State Department keeps worrying about how it will affect our allies. Our problem in foreign policy is not the Soviet Union. Our problem in foreign policy is all these other free peoples whom we keep consulting and who keep saying don't do this, don't do that. But if we did it, they would follow. Where else are they going to go? If I may revive a slogan of the 1960's, I think the slogan of this organization should be "Do It."

Arch Puddington:* I'd like to address a question to Thomas Sowell. You have written a number of books and articles on race, economics, welfare, foreign policy, ethnicity, in which you have spelled out some very striking points of view. Your point of view, however, has been almost uniformly rejected by the black political and civil-rights leadership. In fact, over the past year the ossification of ideas within the black political family has, if anything, intensified, to the point that Reverend Jesse Jackson, who some years ago spoke rather favorably about free enterprise, today in his presidential campaign talks about corporate rape.

My question is two-fold. First, to what degree do you believe that the point of view of the black political and civil-rights elite reflects the attitudes of the grassroots in the black community, and secondly, do you see any set of dynamics, generational changes, ideological changes that would portend a breaking of the ideological logjam that we have right now in the black community?

Thomas Sowell: I'm not sure that the logjam is in the black community so much as it is in the leadership. I would make the point that James Q. Wilson made earlier. The answer depends on the issues.

*Executive Director, League for Industrial Democracy.

On issues that people know about, such as crime in their neighborhood or in the ghetto, the leadership may be totally at odds with the black community. Various attorneys have complained from time to time that there were no blacks on various juries. I remember a few years ago a famous defense attorney said that the ideal jury, if you are a defense attorney, is an all-white jury, so that you can complain there were no blacks on it. But of course if you get an all-black jury, it's going to send your client up the river. In Washington about a decade ago, a group of blacks seized a building and inflicted great amounts of harm, almost entirely among whites. They had an all-black jury, which was out an incredibly short time--I'm not sure how the jurors could have read all the charges--and which came back and convicted the defendants on everything.

On other issues, when you're talking about the Third World or symbolically about Africa, you may or may not have a closer relationship between what the leaders say and what the community says.

In terms of changes, I suspect there is going to be a change only in the community. How fast it occurs depends upon how well people who have different views--including those who hold national office--put those views across. Things like the Bob Jones University case do not do anything to help this process. Last fall, when I was giving a talk at the Cato Institute, someone asked me how long it would take before conservatism began to make progress in the black community. I said that depends upon how intelligently the conservatives behave. And he said, "In other words, not in our lifetime."

Rosanne Klass:* As Thomas Sowell pointed out earlier, we are constantly being told to be nonjudgmental. It seems to me that this nonjudgmentalism is an inappropriate application of Freudianism or psychiatric techniques to political and social problems. Although Mr. Harries may be correct in saying that science per se is now being viewed as an enemy in the popular mind, I am not sure that this is the case with Freudian psychological ideas. In their pop forms, they have spread like weeds.

*Freedom House.

To take another example, we constantly hear about Soviet paranoia. Since paranoia is a clinical term, we are evidently meant to believe that the leadership of the Soviet Union is, as a group, clinically paranoid--even though it gives no other indication of psychiatric illness that we can see.

Moreover, anyone who has ever dealt with a paranoid knows that there is no possible way to soothe him. Yet the argument from presumed Soviet paranoia is being used by a number of political analysts to explain why the United States and other governments should do nothing that might offend or antagonize the Soviets.

Does anybody else see the influence of Freudianism or psychiatry in our policy and thinking?

Norman Podhoretz: Helmut Sonnenfeldt told me at lunch that there's a new school of Kremlinology, which he calls preemptive empathetic paranoia. It consists in figuring out in what way any action the United States might conceivably take will arouse the paranoia of the Soviet Union, and therefore must be regarded as a provocation, and therefore must not be taken.

Suzanne Garment: The kind of science whose influence Rosanne Klass sees is not science. By contrast, when it comes to actual, honest-to-God physical science, what's striking about what is happening now is, on the one hand, the continued vigor of our scientific sector and, on the other hand, the hostility of some of our public institutions towards these scientific endeavors and towards the kinds of decisions we have to make if we're to keep them going.

Chester E. Finn, Jr.: I just want to add that nonjudgmentalism is what you learn in school because the entire educational system is nonjudgmental. It's an amalgam of Freudianism with the therapeutic ethic, of Deweyism and the civil-rights movement--that is, to judge is to discriminate--and UNESCOism or multiculturalism, according to which everything is just as good as everything else and we must take everything

and everybody on their own terms, since who are we to criticize? This leads you to have no standards, and that in turn leads you to make no judgments, which in time leads you to suppose that's the way things ought to be.

Norman Podhoretz: General Edward Rowny, who has been waiting for the Soviet Union to return to the START talks, has been waiting almost as long to ask a question here.

Edward L. Rowny:* As Norman Podhoretz said, I'm your patient START negotiator. I'm patiently waiting by the telephone until the Soviets are ready to resume negotiations on strategic arms. I have no doubt that they will come back; it's in their interest to do so.

I have two questions. First, how can we teach our people to be patient? I think patience is a virtue we lack. You can see how the Soviets use their spare time: they play chess. They take long-range viewpoints. They look at foreign policy in terms of decades. We want instant results; we play electronic games. We often think that if something is not going our way or as fast as we want it to go, it must be our fault. And then we rush to change our own positions simply in order to see results.

The second question is, how can we build a bipartisan foreign policy in this country? How, for example, can we build a Connally-Vandenberg type of bipartisanship in the Senate, so that when I do bring a treaty back to the Senate as I think I shall, there will be a consensus in the Senate to ratify it? It gives the Soviets much comfort to see, for example, the MX come up for a vote. Although I have said that approval of the MX is vital to our negotiations, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff have said it is vital to our security, the last time the MX question came up in the House it won by only nine votes. This is one symptom of the basic problem in our political structure today: the inability of the executive to carry out a foreign policy because the Congress is unwilling to back him up.

*Chairman, U.S. START Delegation.

Ben J. Wattenberg: Speaking tactically, I would doubt that you're going to get any bipartisan consensus between now and the election. That is not in the cards.

When you talk to intelligent, moderate, right-thinking Democrats, and there are quite a few around, about bipartisanship, which they and many other people feel is desperately needed in our foreign policy, they immediately say, where was Ronald Reagan when it came to bipartisanship during the last presidency? He was beating up on the Panama Canal treaty. He was beating up on the SALT treaty. This is a very strange fellow to be coming around knocking on the door now and saying, "I am your President, where is the bipartisanship?"

I think this is a very serious problem. To forge that kind of consensus will require give and take, not only in terms of substance, but more it seems to me in terms of rhetoric. It won't work if you say--or think--that the other folks in the consensus are not really for freedom.

About patience, I have heard the argument that unless you do something very quickly the American public's patience wears out, and therefore you're forced to do something. Ronald Reagan is ahead by twenty percentage points in the polls right now. That is not evidence that the American people have run out of patience. The President is ahead in the public-opinion polls, and he hasn't brought home a treaty. So perhaps we should give the voters a little more credit than is sometimes given to them.

James Q. Wilson: A bipartisan foreign policy is an anomalous development in American political history. It almost never occurs. The Connally-Vandenberg period was unique. It followed upon virtually the only wholly popular war in our history, and the legacy of that event lived on in the minds of the men and women who were crucially involved. When those men and women left, and new wars, traditional wars, wars like Vietnam came back to us, we discovered that the separation of powers built into the Constitution is a powerful incentive against bipartisanship.

That can, however, be overcome. The Panama Canal treaty is an example. There was a lot of irresponsible criticism of it. Yet a Senate in which that irresponsible criticism echoed very loudly debated it at length, and the longer the debate went on, the more sense prevailed. Whether that will happen with START or not, I don't know. Let's hope General Rowny brings home a good treaty.

The one confounding problem in this, the one that makes matters worse now than they have traditionally been in our political history, is that, as Irving Kristol said this morning, our elected officials are now more polarized than before. Senate Republicans are more conservative than Republicans in the country at large. Senate Democrats are more liberal than Democrats in the country at large. That can create problems of great difficulty, and that phenomenon, with the exception of the decade before the Civil War, is unprecedented.

Charles Ball:* Mr. Wattenberg says that we should not question the motives of liberals or their commitment to freedom or their anti-Communism. I think this is an irrelevant point. It is the policies liberals advocate that should concern us. And those policies are manifestly insufficient to the task of maintaining our freedom or opposing Communism.

Nowhere is this demonstrated with greater clarity than in their response to the issue of Central America. The issue, when you take away the cant which surrounds it, is: are we going to let the Soviet Union, Cuba, and Nicaragua impose totalitarianism in Central America? And in response to this the Democrats have been falling all over each other to capitulate, appease, and surrender Central America to the Communists.

The upshot of all this is that America has lost its will to project its power in an effective way. It's irrelevant to talk about the fact that Mondale or Hart want a 4 or 5 percent increase in the defense budget; if they're not willing to use the power we have, it doesn't do us any good. It's very fashionable to genuflect in front of the alter of

*Duke University.

bipartisanship. But forging a bipartisan consensus will require enormous compromises from precisely those people who want to oppose Communism. If we're going to have to compromise to that degree, I don't think bipartisanship is worth it. I think we should just go ahead and try to defeat the Democrats, and forge our own foreign policy.

Ben J. Wattenberg: Charles Balls's comments assume that in the good old days, there was this great, muscular America that stood up and said, by God, let's go get the bad guys, that there was a wall-to-wall coalition in foreign policy. That's just not true. That was not true in 1939 or 1940 or 1941 until there was an attack on this country.

Any time there has been a question in American history of using military force, there has been a huge controversy, as is proper in a democracy. That's what's going on now. And it is not a terrible thing. That there is a controversy does not necessarily mean there is a fight between good and evil.

The position of many Democrats on Central America is in large measure defensible. Many Democrats are not saying we shouldn't send military or economic aid to El Salvador. They are saying that the aid ought to be conditional on progress in human rights. That is not a heinous viewpoint. I don't happen to agree with it, but it is not crazy. As a matter of fact, as I understand it, that was the position of the illustrious Kissinger Commission on Central America.

Norman Podhoretz: Max Singer, who just came back from El Salvador and who has written quite a lot on this issue, has a quick comment on the Central America question.

Max Singer:* I agree with what both Charles Ball and Ben Wattenberg are saying about the debate over Central America. If the facts were as is assumed, then the position of the Democrats would be

*President, The Potomac Organization.

reasonable. But the crime about Central America is that this country has been debating on a mistaken view of the facts. We've been sold a false picture of what's happening down there, and we've been conducting a debate on the basis of that misunderstanding. So on the real facts, Charles Ball is right. But on the facts that are accepted in this country, Ben Wattenberg is right. And I think the majority of the Kissinger Commission accepted conditionality only because it was politically necessary, not because they thought it was right, so their conclusion is not good evidence.

Norman Podhoretz: The Kissinger Commission actually recommended conditionality conditionally. That is, it said that the conditionality should not go so far as to make it impossible for the Central American countries to resist Communist aggression by military means. So it was in itself a highly qualified conditionality.

David Schimel:* First, I'd like to challenge Mr. Puddington's suggestion that Thomas Sowell's ideas, admittedly unconventional in the black leadership and the black community, have been completely rejected. For many years, Thomas Sowell has made the argument that much of the large-scale unemployment among black teenagers is a function of an overly high minimum wage that eliminates jobs rather than protecting people from the alleged evils of capitalism. A week ago, the Conference of Black Mayors came out in support of a sub-minimum wage for teenagers. At least some black leaders, it seems, are finally coming around to the idea that more welfare isn't going to solve the problem.

Beyond that, there is the issue of single-parent families in the black community. The proportion of female-headed households is now staggering; so too is the rate of illegitimacy among these families. The problem has reached the point where it can no longer be ignored and can longer be attributed to racism.

*Attorney, New York City.

This raises an issue that wasn't mentioned in all the discussion about whether we ought to be upbeat or downbeat about the condition of the country. And that is the clear trend towards the destruction of the traditional family unit. The single head of household, particularly female head of household, is no longer and has not been solely a black issue. It is now increasingly becoming a general issue in our society.

Is there any comment on what are the implications of this change, and what should be our response to it in the long-run?

Chester E. Finn, Jr.: The impotence of social policy always gets displayed most clearly in discussions about the deterioration of the family and what should be done about it. Such discussions always lead to a wringing of the hands and very little by way of constructive policy proposals.

We've seen over a long period of time the relentless professionalization of child care, carrying with it the assumption that professionals somehow do better at looking after children than parents do, that the children are somehow better off in day-care centers, in school, than they would be at home. Now, at last, we are beginning to see evidence not only that the professionals may be incompetent, but also from time to time that they actually do dreadful things to children: witness the recent reports about that day-care center in Los Angeles and about the Children's Theater in Minneapolis, where children entrusted to professionals were abused. This should at least lead to skepticism about the professionalization of child care, which might conceivably turn us back to the proposition that families are a reasonable place to look after at least part of the upbringing of children.

James Q. Wilson: The main problem in thinking about families is, as Chester Finn indicated, that no one has come up with a reasonable policy. In the United States that's especially difficult to do. This country was founded on the proposition that virtue would not be sufficient to sustain a regime for

a large nation, and that therefore institutions had to be created to take advantage of the self-interested tendencies of people. It was assumed that a reasonable degree of virtue could be assured by local and intimate arrangements. But when those local and intimate relationships began to unravel under the combined influence of a growth in freedom, increased prosperity, and a change in attitudes about the proper degree of self-control, this assumption was called into question.

No one has really addressed this issue forcefully, although clearly that is what religious conservatives and fundamentalists in this country are concerned about. But their policy proposals, in my view, do not address the problem. I do not think that whatever position ultimately prevails on the subject of abortion, school prayer, or the Equal Rights Amendment will have the slightest impact on the trends we're seeing. That leaves us in the awkward position of having an urgent problem and no agenda. The problem is one of ideas, but I am very skeptical that a policy proposal can be devised.

Evelyn Avery:* Mr. Kristol commented that the sexual revolution seemed to be stabilizing, that couples who were living together are now marrying, having children, buying homes, and so forth. I was wondering, first, whether the women's movement has also stabilized, or is it still gaining ground? And secondly, what kind of impact has the women's movement had on our institutions and even on our foreign policy?

Suzanne Garment: There has been a certain routinization of the women's movement as more and more women enter into traditionally male jobs. The women in those traditional jobs are beginning to expose some of the problems in the initial beliefs of the movement. Going to work and raising the kids is a problem, always has been, always will be. I think that problem is being addressed now with a greater sense of complexity than it was in the earlier days.

*Associate Professor of English, Towson State University.

I haven't seen that sense of complexity in the discussion about women and foreign policy. There, we're still in the realm of pure contradiction. On the one hand, there is the claim that women are like men and therefore can be given more and more power in this area; on the other hand, there is the assertion that women are different from men and thus have a special set of concerns that will give them special views on foreign policy--most of which, to the extent they have been articulated--I find quite alarming.

Thomas Sowell: It struck me in a couple of polls I've seen that what are called women's issues are issues on which men are slightly more in agreement with the position of what are called women's organizations than the women are. There's a reason for that. It doesn't cost men anything to agree with them.

The other thing is that the women's movement itself has moved away from the kind of positions it took, say, in the mid-1960's. Far from shaping society, it seems to have been shaped by changing public opinion in the society at large.

Ben J. Wattenberg: I'm not so sure that women's politics was ever that influential. It seems to me that most of the changes among women in the United States in the last thirty years--and there have been enormous changes in terms of jobs, education, and so forth--antedate the women's movement, and that the movement was created by changing conditions among women, including changing views about what they felt their role in this society ought to be, for good or for ill.

Adam Meyerson:* We know from Grenada that there will be widespread public support for U.S. military action abroad if we win quickly, if few lives are lost, and if we are welcomed universally as liberators. And we know from Vietnam, and to a lesser extent from Korea, that widespread support begins to dwindle when we're involved in a protracted war with a large-scale loss

*Editor, Policy Review.

of life, where we are perceived as being at a military stalemate, and where we are not universally welcomed as liberators. What guidelines do these perceptions of public opinion, if they are correct, give us for formulating foreign policy, and especially for considering how we should use force abroad on a sustained basis?

James Q. Wilson: The pattern of two kinds of wars--a Grenada-like surgical strike and its opposite, perhaps Vietnam--is too simple a dichotomy. The level of public support for our involvement in Korea among the average citizens was rarely greater or less than the level of support for our involvement in Vietnam. The crucial difference between those two wars is that elite opinion supported our involvement in Korea and turned against our involvement in Vietnam. Popular opinion did not change. It could always be divided into thirds in both wars: a third who said we shouldn't be there at all; a third who said we should do whatever we were doing; and a third who said we should commit more resources in order to win decisively. I suspect that we will always have this distribution of public opinion on issues of this sort. What's crucial, however, is whether elite opinion will support a war or not.

What worries me is that the nature of public opinion has been misread not only by people who disagree with our military involvements, but by the United States Defense Department as well. One of the most disturbing things I have heard is a succession of chiefs of staff of the various services--and I'm thinking primarily of the army--declaring that as a precondition of American military involvement abroad, there must be assured popular support at home. That is tantamount to saying we should disband the military because, save for World War II, that condition has almost never existed. It is also, it seems to me, an abdication of the principle of civilian rule: that the President, not public opinion, decides on the commitment of troops. Public opinion then judges the performance of the President. Elite opinion about our international responsibilities has shifted sufficiently to affect not only people who write, but people who are generals. That to me is a very sobering thought.

Norman Podhoretz: The generals are getting even with the intellectuals who believe that war is too important to be left to the generals. The generals think that public opinion is too important to be left to the intellectuals.

CAN THE POLITICAL

SYSTEM RESPOND?

Austin Ranney

We are all here because we are very concerned about some of the things that are going on in this country and in the world. I think we all have the sense that there is a growing emergency, that a lot of the values that we hold most dear are now threatened by many powerful forces.

The general question that we want to raise today is whether the American political/governmental system is capable of responding in the way that we would like to see it respond, or indeed in the way that it has to respond in order to preserve those values. On such matters, I'm an optimist. Some of you have heard me define an optimist as someone who believes his future is uncertain. That form of optimism is, I think, going to dominate the morning discussion.

Laurence H. Silberman

I want to talk first about what's going on within the Democratic party in the primary campaign.

Secondly, I'd like to discuss what I think the nature of the campaign between the Democrats and the Republicans will be. And thirdly, I'd like to say a few words about foreign-policy issues as I see them developing in the presidential campaign.

It is popular wisdom here in Washington and around the country that there is very little difference between Gary Hart and Walter Mondale except in generational style. I don't think there is much of a difference on foreign policy. I think Mondale feels that with the support of the AFL-CIO and Lane Kirkland, he naturally will incorporate within his coalition the so-called hawks in the Democratic party. Thus he really doesn't have to make much of an effort to portray himself as a hard-liner in foreign policy. But in economic policy, there is an issue of some importance separating Hart and Mondale.

If you go back to the Roosevelt era in the Democratic party, there was one factor in the New Deal that is not much written about but which was significant. In the aftermath of the Depression, there was a widespread view that competition had had something to do with the Depression. The word competition acquired a bad odor. Such phrases as "predatory competition" and "cutthroat competition" were popular in legislation in the 1930's which sought to cartelize American business and reduce competition, whether it was in the financial industry, the telecommunications industry, airlines, trucking, and so forth.

When Jimmy Carter became President, a number of people came into his administration who were in favor of deregulation, that is, competition. The Carter administration, to the delight and surprise of many people, pushed for deregulation in a number of industries. And the Reagan administration has continued that process.

The interesting thing about the campaign between Hart and Mondale is that Mondale is backed by the AFL-CIO. We use the term conservative here to mean certain things, but actually the most conservative institution in a European sense in the United States today is the AFL-CIO. It is the institution that is most afraid of change of any kind. It wants to hold on to the status quo, and competition threatens that. It doesn't like competition internationally or domestically. It doesn't like it anywhere. As the

AFL-CIO candidate, Mondale has set himself against competition.

Hart, on the other hand, seems to be for it. Two issues that have come up in the campaign reflect this difference: the Chrysler bail-out, which Hart opposed, and protectionism, which he is against.

The difference in their attitudes toward competition may be the most important underlying issue in the Hart-Mondale campaign. It will be interesting to see how that issue plays itself out over the long term. Since I care a great deal about competition, both domestically and internationally, and deplore protectionism, I would very much like to see two parties rather than just one party in favor of competition. I say all of this notwithstanding the fact that if I, as a Republican, had to choose between the two, I'd pick Mondale because I care more about national security policy, and I trust Lane Kirkland on that matter more than I do on any domestic matter.

Secondly, I think the election campaign this year is going to be an exceedingly nasty one. It is Mondale's judgment that the only chance he has against Reagan is to paint Reagan as evil incarnate. You can already see indications of that in the kinds of moralistic tones Mondale and Hart are adopting.

I don't know yet what the Reagan response to that is going to be, either on domestic or foreign policy. There are two ways Reagan can respond. The first is to suggest that Mondale and the Democrats are being silly and hyperbolic, the fabled, "Aw, Fritz, you've got to be kidding." But I don't think that will be the end of it. And that brings me to the question of foreign policy.

Mondale, assuming he's nominated, will very much want to make Central America a major issue in the campaign. If one thinks about whether the political system can respond, it seemed to me perfectly obvious at the beginning of this administration that the only possible way we could avoid a Vietnam-type disaster in Central America was to use our potential leverage on Nicaragua. Indeed, the administration has tried to do that. Indispensable to that policy was the non-setting of limitations. If there ever is a conceivable chance for a *modus vivendi* in Central America, it will only be if the Nicaraguans, the Cubans, and

the Soviets think that our aims are open-ended, that they could include the overthrow of the Sandinista regime (our fundamental problem in Vietnam was that the North Vietnamese never had to worry about being overthrown). The worst thing in the world we can do is to debate what the limits should be, which is exactly what we did in Vietnam and exactly what we are doing now in Central America.

It is crushing to see the political process here in Washington focusing the whole debate on silly little limitations--whether we should have fifty advisors or seventy-five, whether or not we should put acoustical mines in the harbor--when the only chance we have is to impress upon the Sandinistas that we have no limitations. Why is that happening? Is it because the Democrats basically do not wish us to prevail in Central America? There are some who think that. On occasions I get depressed and think that's possible. But I can't quite believe it.

The reason congressmen are behaving so foolishly over Central America is that it is not an issue for the American people; therefore, it is an issue dominated by the media. I've come to the conclusion that the media--particularly the networks, which are so tendentious, so hyperbolic, and so biased--cannot decisively influence the American people. They can't override the party system or dominate the discussion on any issue the American people care about. But if the American people don't care about an issue, the media can scare congressmen to death. That's in fact what they've done on Central America. I've watched congressmen and talked to them and seen them take positions on Central America which they knew were silly, but which they took because they are afraid of the media. And they're afraid of the media because the American people have not internalized the problem in Central America. Their good sense would come to the fore if they had. It is therefore very much in the interest of the President, and some of us have been arguing this for three years, to make Central America an issue, to make it understood by the American people.

Mondale will also want to make U.S.-Soviet relations a campaign issue. What I find fascinating as we go into the campaign is that for the first time the Soviet Union is playing heavily in the American political process. The Soviets tried to influence the

last election in Germany, and they got very, very crude; and now they're trying it in the United States. That presents an enormous opportunity for the President and the Republican party. The question is how to handle it.

My own inclination is to handle it in the way it should be handled: to say that if Chernenko and the Politburo want Mondale, the American people will have to think very hard about the implications of that. A lot of people will say that's McCarthyism. But of course it isn't, and the question is how long it will take before the political parties, particularly the Republican party, are able to shake off the shackles with which McCarthy bound us.

Eugene V. Rostow

The question put before us is, can the political system respond? My answer is very much in the spirit of what Irving Kristol said yesterday about opinion polls. Of course it can respond, if our leaders accept the responsibility of leading. The country, as all the statistics bandied about yesterday demonstrate, is fundamentally itself, sound, and healthy. The nation which prevailed in the Civil War can prevail over the troubles we face today, which are far less serious than those were. But it can do so only if our leaders lead. And by leaders, I mean not only those who participate in political life, but also the entire range of the intelligentsia.

I shall confine my remarks to foreign policy. My belief is that the sacred words, liberal and conservative, which have such great significance in so many contexts, have absolutely no application to the realm of foreign policy. Foreign policy can be wise or foolish; it can be prudent or imprudent; it can be reckless or passive; but it cannot be liberal or conservative. The problem for all of us, whichever side of that fluid ideological boundary we belong to, is to decide what makes sense and to do it as a nation, not as a party, a sect, or a club.

When I spoke here two years ago,* I said that President Reagan had accomplished three enormous things. He had put a cap on the rate of growth of the welfare state, which everybody, all across the ideological spectrum, understood was necessary; in all Western societies the rate of growth of the welfare state had become a cancer and could not be allowed to grow indefinitely. Secondly, he had manifested a determined opposition to inflation which equally was a cancer eating away at the societies of the Western nations. And thirdly, he had undertaken to restore the military balance with the Soviet Union. These were the three great strategic accomplishments dramatized in the first year of the administration.

Then I said the next task, and a critical one, was to formulate and begin to carry out a post-Vietnam foreign policy, to answer the call that Owen Harries made yesterday for a dream. That is the indispensable and most practical first step that we need. Lord Carrington, the former British Foreign Secretary who is now the Secretary General of NATO, said very much the same thing recently. He said that the greatest weakness of NATO at the present time was the absence of a vision of what we should be trying to accomplish, and of agreement on practicable means for achieving that vision. It is a thought that Ortega y Gasset put some years ago in his brilliant essay on the invertebrate character of Spain. He said nations are not bound together by shared history, shared recollections of the past, but by shared aspirations for the future, and that Spain began to disintegrate in 1585 or thereabouts when the dream of indefinite expansion and heroic imperialism was lost.

Of course President Reagan has not yet succeeded in formulating a vision or a dream, a notion of the future to which we could hope to rally our own people and allied nations. Our foreign policy is still becalmed in the post-Vietnam doldrums, as the appalling fiasco in Lebanon demonstrates. The issue before us is what lessons we should draw from Reagan's

*At the Committee for the Free World's conference on "The Transatlantic Crisis."

hesitation to confront the Vietnam demon, and from the weakness and indecision of the policy that we have pursued so far throughout the world.

Irving Kristol and Owen Harries indicated yesterday that the policy of containment--the main lines of the foreign policy that we have pursued since the time of Truman and Acheson--is dead; that NATO is moribund or worse; and that a policy which they call global unilateralism, as contrasted with liberal internationalism, is the dream and the vision which should guide us in the future.

This is the key issue in the foreign-policy debate. We will not liberate ourselves from the paralyzing incubus of Vietnam, the doubts and indecisions about the course we have pursued from Truman's time until now, and are still nominally pursuing, until we face this issue. I have no doubt that those doubts can be overcome, despite the basic isolationism of the American culture.

If you think for a moment about how we got into World War I and World War II, you will realize the nature of the task before us. In 1914-1916, of course, the old isolationist heritage was dominant and unchallenged. There were very few people in the country, Theodore Roosevelt, and Woodrow Wilson to a certain extent, who tried to articulate an alternative policy. Woodrow Wilson's campaign slogan in 1916 was that he kept us out of war. Nonetheless, he led the nation into war a year later. He had defined in his mind an alternative foreign policy to which the country rallied when events compelled a change, and which the country then rejected, of course, at the end of the war.

The dominant feeling in the United States in the 1920's and 1930's was that our entry into that war had been a great mistake. Wilson was rejected, Wilsonianism was repudiated, we had a neutrality act, and we were determined not to do what we had done in 1917. And yet, Churchill and Roosevelt did what Theodore Roosevelt and Wilson had done earlier: they defined an alternative foreign policy, backed by relatively small groups of intellectuals. The universities in those days were absolutely isolationist except for a few Francophiles and Anglophiles and a few odd characters who for some reason had thought about the balance of power. But when the time came, when Pearl Harbor

arrived, there was an alternative policy in place, and the nation knew it was right.

After the war, came the question of Korea. Yesterday the question was asked by Irving Kristol, if Korea occurred today would we rally in the same way? I agree with his comment that it is doubtful that we would. Our decision at the time was the result not only of the character of Truman and Acheson, who were providing leadership, but of a universal conviction about the mistakes of the 1930's: the conviction that if we had reacted in Manchuria or the Rhineland or Spain, if we had arrested the momentum of the German drive, if we had carried out our responsibilities to confine aggression and defeat it, the war would never have come. There was also an element of guilt--that we should never have repudiated Wilson's advice. There was the underlying conviction that peace was indivisible. All that was very strong in 1950. And, of course, all that has faded, both with the passage of time--people are now dominant in our public life who never knew Pharaoh, after all--and with the experience of Korea and Vietnam.

Irving Kristol puts before us the challenging thesis that the convictions behind the policy of general containment, the foundation of the Truman Doctrine and of the very progressive and active foreign policy that Truman and Acheson put together in a burst of creative energy nearly forty years ago, have vanished, and that we must have a more restrictive foreign policy which he identifies as global unilateralism and contrasts, as I said before, with liberal or global internationalism. It's that thesis I want to challenge. I disagree with it fundamentally.

James Q. Wilson yesterday asked how we can avoid becoming like Sweden. I think that puts the issue very well. In England or the United States or many other countries, if you asked the man in the street whether he would like his country to be like Sweden or Switzerland and not have troops all over the world, his answer would be, "Yes, you bet I would." But of course we can't live like those countries. Why can't we? We can't because the enviable status of Switzerland and Sweden in the world presumes that there is a generally stable state system which will allow them to function as rich and happy neutrals within it, and that that state system will operate in accordance with

generally accepted rules, the norms of international law, one of which is to respect the neutrality of states which the great powers have agreed can be neutral.

We don't have that option because there can't be a stable state system unless we participate in making and enforcing its rules. That's the moral of the First World War and the Second World War and of all the bitter experience we've had since then. The rules which have to be accepted and generally respected by all parts of the international system--especially the rules regarding the international use of force--are embodied for us now in the Charter of the United Nations. So we don't have the option of isolationism or unilateralism because the state system cannot survive unless we take the lead in organizing the coalitions which alone could support it. Single-handed, we don't have the power to enforce the necessary rules of the state system. The notion of unilateralism in foreign policy, global or regional, is a total mirage.

We have heard a good deal of grumbling about the state of Europe at the present time. As long as I've been involved with foreign affairs and the affairs of NATO, I've heard this steadily. NATO has always been in disarray. We've always grumbled about our allies. We grumbled about allies in the First World War and the Second World War. It's a natural and inevitable phenomenon. Ike had a healthy rule: you couldn't talk about the British as the "goddamned British." He just forbade it. I try to follow a policy myself based on a wonderful story about Churchill. He was standing with a friend in the well of the House of Commons when Atlee went by. The friend said, "Isn't Atlee a fine fellow and such a modest man." Churchill is supposed to have said, "He has so much to be modest about." Within the alliance, we have much to be modest about, and I prefer to focus on our own shortcomings rather than on those of our allies. If you go back over the history of this alliance in the last thirty years, our allies can reproach us pretty powerfully for mistakes of enormous magnitude for which we are still paying and for which they also have paid.

But the simple answer to the question is not a matter of good manners or skill in conducting alliance diplomacy; it is a matter of arithmetic. We cannot cut ourselves loose from Europe or Japan. For the

simplest reasons of geopolitics, we cannot allow the Soviet Union to take charge of these enormous aggregations of population, real estate, and economic power. The fundamental reason for the NATO alliance is not only our cultural affinity with Europe; it is that if the Soviet Union took charge of Western Europe, and was able to control the area and the resources of Western Europe, the balance of power would tilt irrevocably against us. The Japanese and the Chinese would draw the necessary conclusions from such an event and make their own accommodations with the Soviet Union. So would many smaller nations. And we should find ourselves isolated, impotent, and extremely angry on our own continent.

The free world plus China has more than enough power to restore the state system in the model that corresponds to our interests, based on general compliance with its rules. But before we can accomplish this goal, we have to understand it and agree on it as the dream or vision which guides our foreign policy. To me, unilateralism is another name for the illusions of old-fashioned isolationism in this country, and I remind you that its great advocates in the last couple of generations--Borah and La Follette and George Norris and Burton K. Wheeler and Robert A. Taft--weren't liberals and weren't conservatives, they were both. For the 1980's, it's a suicidal policy. It can't work. We always assume, despite all the evidence of our experience over the last century or two, that the familiar world we see is immutable. It isn't; it's a stage set. And we can see it destroyed as we've seen the empire of the Romanoffs and the Austro-Hungarian empire destroyed.

The issue before us was put very well, I think, better than I've seen it put by anyone else, by the Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore, Mr. Rajahratnam. He said the United States has to pursue its foreign-policy goals with the same energy and enthusiasm with which the Soviet Union pursues its foreign-policy goals. None of us, he said, among the small nations of Asia, want Pax Sovietica. That isn't what we'd prefer. But if it's the only article on the shelf, that's what we'll take.

We are often met with a contrast between a foreign policy of Realpolitik and a foreign policy of Wilsonianism or idealism. I would say they're not incompatible, but two aspects of the same thing. We

have to have a balance of power or there's no possibility of survival for the United States and its friends. But that balance of power can be sustained only if there's general, reciprocal respect for the rules of international law which purport to govern the international use of force. The balance of power and Wilsonian idealism are not antonyms. They are twin elements of the same idea.

My conclusion is a simple one. It is summed up in a story about a college friend whose father was then a colonel in the army fighting the battles of the tank corps. All the military establishments of the world went through the same battle about how to use tanks, starting back in 1916. And Colonel Scott, who later became General Scott, came home one day, furious and frustrated, and said, "You know the worst thing about this kind of job is that when you get thoroughly fed up with your own government, you can't go and work for another government."

Nelson W. Polsby

Yesterday we learned that what's going on out there is as follows: with respect to ordinary people, in the account of James Q. Wilson and Ben Wattenberg, there is a return to normal optimism, political moderation, and acceptance of governmental activity on a wide spectrum of issues. With respect to various leadership groups, in the accounts of Suzanne Garment, Thomas Sowell, and Chester Finn, there is extremism: for example, in the form of solution-seeking without understanding the need for tradeoffs, and of adversarial or hostile posturing toward government, as in the subculture of the Washington press corps or in the social-studies texts. I will accept all this more or less as given, although I would insert some qualifications, especially about the leadership groups, if I were starting from scratch.

But instead, since our assignment is to talk about the responsiveness of the political system to conditions like these, let me move forward to the following points. First, ordinary people--that is, the ones who are politically moderate, reasonably optimistic, and who accept governmental activity--

don't set the tone or the context for policymaking. The leadership groups do. So if we care about policymaking, about the alternatives that are considered and the atmosphere in which they are generated, justified, and winnowed, then we have to pay much more attention to elite subcultures than to mass attitudes. When masses enter into the picture, as, for example, in elections, they are activated and led by elites who compete to define the terms of debate and structure the alternatives for them.

So it's elites and the institutions they run that should concern us, especially those institutions that mediate between large bodies of people and policymakers. In the United States there are three great institutional complexes that do this work, all of which have undergone some considerable transformations over the last twenty years. These are parties, interest groups, and the news media.

Interest groups are the most difficult to describe simply because they come in all sizes and shapes, and the way they behave depends greatly upon how they are linked to the parties and to the news media. In general, those that have made their bets on the political parties have lost ground in their influence, and those that have succeeded in hooking themselves up to the mass media have gained in influence. Among the latter, there are the so-called public-interest groups, and one of the most interesting facts about these groups is that so many of them have no members at all. The permeability of our political system to interest groups and their claims is really quite extraordinary.

The second big complex, the news media, have come in for a lot of scrutiny lately. There are three great master theories which purport to explain what goes on in the news media. The first, a venerable tradition, the most distinguished practitioner of which was A. J. Liebling, explains news media performance as the result of the prejudices of the publisher or the owner.

The second, a kissing cousin of the first, claims that what exists in the news media is the result of the attitudes and prejudices of journalists, quite frequently elicited through questionnaires, the most recent large-scale example of which is work by Stanley Rothman. He has administered large numbers of

questionnaires to journalists and discovered that they are, on the whole, radical chic or at least chic.

My view is that both these theories have some merit to them in that they can explain journalistic performance from time to time. But for the purpose of explaining the performance of the news media in general, a third path is better. That is to understand something about the work ways and the professional subcultures of journalists. Those workways and subcultures control much more of their output even than their own personal prejudices. For journalists, a judgment as to what's important and what isn't doesn't arise exclusively out of what they believe about the existence of God or any of the other things that Stanley Rothman asked them about. Rather, it arises from a shared perception among all the people on a beat of what their editors will demand that they notice. And that's a negotiated product between the people who are covering the story and the people who are putting out the press releases, making the speeches, and attempting to get into the news. The deformations of this process are quite significant, and a lot of them have to do with the need for compression and the need to maintain a competitive edge over all the other people who are attempting to deliver news.

Thirdly, the sick institution, the institution which has got the most problems, is the political parties. The capacity of political parties to do the absolutely essential work of intermediation between leaders and followers in this country has suffered greatly over the last dozen years, principally because of actions that have taken place in the Democratic party.

The Democratic party is by far the majority party in the United States, in terms of the allegiance of voters and citizens and also in terms of the number of people elected to every public office--excepting the Presidency. The fact is that the Democratic party, in the name of internal democratization and by a series of extraordinary steps by its leaders without due process, crippled itself with respect to the presidential nomination process. This is something that is playing itself out this year in a somewhat milder form than has been experienced by the Democratic party in the past. But the two parties are not exactly alike. The Democrats are a much more varied and heterogeneous

bunch, and have much greater need of processes of explicit reconciliation in order to mobilize the majority which exists in the population to elect a President. They have systematically stripped away the processes by which reconciliation can take place, and have put themselves more or less in the hands of blind arithmetic in the successive primary elections and caucuses they conduct.

The actions taken by the Democratic party have had tremendous consequences not only for Democrats, but also for the Republican party. The fact that the Democratic party has over the last dozen years or so made more or less a gift of the presidency to the Republican party has proven to be an incentive to the Republican party to maintain its extremely narrow base in the electorate. This means that neither the Democrats nor the Republicans make an adequate effort to mobilize genuine majorities in the population. It should not be a source of great contentment to Republicans that they get the presidency handed to them for free and then have to face the fact that they haven't got their realignment, or a consensus behind the policies they wish to push. If the Republicans would organize themselves to listen to a broader spectrum of opinion in the United States, they would have a hope of becoming a genuine majority party, rather than the residuary legatee of the maiming that the Democrats do to themselves.

So my answer to the question of whether or not political institutions can respond is a qualified one. It seems to me that the focus ought to be on improving the capacity of institutions to listen more carefully to things that are actually going on out there. For groups like the Committee for the Free World, the focus ought to be on caring a great deal about civility of discourse at the elite level, where decisions actually get made. Groups like this should be very busily asserting that facts are important and should guide opinions.

An example would be in the field of political participation. We have heard for years and still hear that the lack of political participation in the United States is caused by alienation, that alienation of Americans from politics causes them to vote at much lower levels than is the case in other Western democracies. Anyone who listened to Ben Wattenberg yesterday might have picked up the inference that that

clearly can't be true, since virtually all the nations where voting participation is higher than ours contain far more alienated people than we've got. Political participation is really about the difficulty of registration, the youth of our population, the fact that Americans move around a lot, and the fair number of ineligibles who are counted as eligible voters. There are public policies, in short, which bear on the issue of political participation and which entirely bypass the propensity of people to use this issue as an excuse for saying untrue, inaccurate, and demoralizing things about the American electorate.

I should think there would be a lot of other examples ranging all the way from affirmative action to arms control. The purpose of maintaining dialogue and increasing the input of facts into such dialogues is this: the appeal to mass attitudes comes late in the game. The first and highest priority is in enlightening elite attitudes and providing a context for the attitudes of political leaders.

Penn Kemble

The discussion yesterday and some of it today left me with this impression: the American public, we seem to feel, still has the capacity to do battle with those who challenge the democratic idea. But after three and a half years of Republican domination in the White House and the Senate, we have yet to see a mobilization of this potential that provides much confidence about our future prospects.

Suzanne Garment and Chester Finn touched upon the aspects of our predicament which seem most troublesome: the state of affairs in the media, the churches, and the educational world--what might be called the institutions of our culture. It suggests a metaphor drawn from a small country that is very much on our minds: El Salvador. The volcanoes of the New Left have pretty well gone dead, but their slopes are still infested with well-organized guerrilla bands whose forays preoccupy the public mind and prevent any serious work of national reconstruction. The democratic forces of the country seem too divided, too ill-equipped, and too hesitant to confront the forces of the Left with any authority.

I'd like to touch briefly upon several points which concern this predicament. I would contend that our political system is not responding adequately to the situation we find ourselves in. I think Ben Wattenberg yesterday was correct in pointing out that the Democrats have in many respects moved away from the extremism of the McGovern-Carter era; but such movement has hardly been sufficient to permit a "liberation" of the institutions of our culture. Our problem in the main lies in the presidential nominating process within the Democratic party. This process provides an occasion for the remnants of the Left to stream out of their sanctuaries in the cultural institutions to assert a kind of moral and intellectual veto over a large portion of our national life.

George McGovern may not have gotten many votes, but the assertion that he is in fact the conscience of the Democratic party was received with a kind of nodding assent by many in the country, by many in the Democratic party, and certainly by many in the media. It was deference to McGovern's claim that prevented John Glenn from fulfilling his mission as a successor to Henry Jackson; that prevented Walter Mondale from pounding Gary Hart for his agnostic views on totalitarianism and the threat of Cuba in our hemisphere; and that has given license to the bizarre alliances which undergird Jesse Jackson's campaign.

The problem in the Democratic party is the delegate-selection network of the Left created during the anti-Vietnam insurgency. That network is today being challenged in the Democratic party principally by our trade-union movement. This is a major development in the Democratic party. Its outcome is by no means certain. The trade-union movement itself is not solidly united or clearly defined in its program. But there is a contest going on in the Democratic party, and anyone who presumes that the party will emerge from this campaign year with the old alliances of the Left intact could very well be wrong.

To move to the Republican party: one has to say that a significant portion of the difficulty we have faced in transforming the institutions of our culture, making them a part of a national realignment, does lie at the feet of the current administration. This is an administration which owes its election to a resurgence of patriotism and a concern for the totalitarian

threat. On too many occasions this administration has preferred, rather than meeting the responsibilities of its mandate, simply to take the money and run. It did this in the Polish debt crisis; it did it, in a sense, in Lebanon. But the clearest indication of its weakness was in its first year in office when, instead of facing the international problems clearly, it acted as if the main threat to the free world was the marginal rate of taxation. Fidel Castro was put on the back burner, where he proceeded to boil over.

I don't wish to overstate the shortcomings of the Reagan administration. But its difficulty in facing the problems of the culture--the entrenchment of the Left in the institutions of the culture--is one of the things that brings us together in such strength on this occasion.

Perhaps part of the difficulty is that Republicans feel incompetent operating in the cultural/political milieu. It's the world of the do-gooders, the world, as someone disdainfully said yesterday, of the bureaucrats. It's the world of school marms and preachers and all that lot. The business culture, on which so much of a Republican administration rests, has a natural disdain for those worlds. It has a certain anxiety about coming to terms with them and their problems. But I think that our difficulty lies even beyond the historical shortcomings of Republicanism in this country.

I am puzzled, for instance, why this Republican administration, in dealing with its problems in Central America, has never done some of the things which come so naturally to liberal Democrats. I remember when the Panama Canal treaty and the Salt II treaty were up for debate that there was a constant drumbeat of ads in the newspapers and a rush of direct-mail letters. It sometimes appears as though the current administration uses the President as a corporate vice-president for communications. When there is some trouble with public opinion, he is sent out there to make a speech, but there is no organized backup, there is no follow-through. I think this is one of the reasons why, in many of the foreign-policy issues that so concern us, we have such volatility in public sentiment, and why so many victories are quickly lost to assaults from the media and the other institutions of our culture.

Let me close with this thought on what may be a difficulty for conservatives, and for a party based heavily in the business community, in dealing with the problems we face in international affairs. I tend to concur with those who have noted the lack of any sense of vision or larger purpose among many of those who are worried about the threat of totalitarianism. I think we have not enunciated such a purpose or a vision. Traditionally, there is such a sense of purpose in what is called "the American dream." But I find conservatives today somewhat uncomfortable with notions of dreams or visions. There seems to be a reluctance on the part of neo-conservatives and business conservatives to enunciate such a broad purpose in current public debate.

My sense is that there is such a purpose and it is our support for the democratic idea and the democratic system. I think we have much evidence that this is indeed a potential organizing principle for our foreign policy in the years ahead. We've had tremendous successes in establishing democracy in places where many people felt its chances were slim. I remember, during the struggle to establish democracy in Portugal, William F. Buckley wrote that Portugal could never really expect democracy. But today, not only in Portugal but around the Mediterranean rim, the threat of Euro-communism has pretty well abated. We have an arc of democratic countries running from Portugal to Israel, with some weak points in between. Democracy has been enormously successful in the last decade in the Caribbean and in Latin America. I think that it can be said that something like 90 percent of the population of this region today lives in societies which are either reasonably democratic or are evolving toward democratic forms.

So there is a democratic constituency worldwide. It's not a simple question of an East-West conflict, because we have democratic friends in the East. It's not a simple question of a North-South conflict, because we have democratic friends in the South. It's not a simple question of capitalism versus socialism, because we have friends who regard themselves as social democrats, and adhere to much of the rhetoric of socialism, even though they have retained significant elements of a market system within their societies.

So it seems to me we have both an idea--which is, after all, in great part an American idea--and a world-wide constituency for it. I would hope that conservatives would shed a little bit of their skepticism and embrace the democratic idea as the basis for a foreign policy in the next four years. Otherwise, I am afraid that the old ideas of the anti-democratic Left will come creeping out of their holes and, once the Reagan administration passes into history, we will be back again with many of the same problems we've had over the last decade.

Michael Novak

It was suggested to us that we were today to talk about the problems in the political system, particularly in our two political parties. But it does seem, on reflection, that that can't be where the problem lies at the moment.

There is, to begin with, and whatever the polls say, confusion in the population. I recently visited Seattle and Boston, for example. If you read the newspapers in those cities, or talk to various groups of people there, you can see the extent to which discussions of Central America and discussions of the fairness issue are framed by the conventional wisdom of the Left. It's not that people necessarily buy that wisdom--the opinion polls would show they resist it--it's just that to the extent these issues are discussed, they are discussed in the language of the Left.

There is confusion in the political elites. The Democratic party, in its primary campaigns this year, has been bounded by the definitions given to political problems by the New York Times and the Washington Post. But those definitions do not fit reality. That's why the Democratic candidates have so frequently seemed out of touch with what's going on in the country.

There are also limits in the intellectual elites. If you visit universities or intellectual centers, you find insufficient sympathy for realism in international affairs and realism in domestic affairs. It

is amazing how many taboos there are, and how much hostility is aroused by the simplest propositions. (One exception to this is the increasing and pointed realism of the New Republic in international affairs, something one has come not to expect in most magazines one picks up.)

In the political culture, it seems to me, there are three different levels of discourse. There is a high level of discourse and on this level, I think, our part of the spectrum does best. There is a middlebrow level, which I would define as encompassing those people who are still bound by the conventional wisdom of the recent past. I would describe the difference between these two levels in the following way: when I lived in or near Manhattan, I discovered that quite frequently arguments were about articles which were going to be published in the next three months, or books which were going to appear next year. When I went elsewhere to teach, I found that people were just getting copies of articles which had appeared eight months or a year ago and that the arguments, not with everybody, but with substantial numbers of one's colleagues, were about things one had forgotten and couldn't remember the answers to. That's the difference between the high level of discourse and the middlebrow level. The latter conveys the reigning passions to all "well-informed" people. But being "well-informed" today means almost always being badly informed. It means being a year or so behind what the evidence has already shown to be the case. An example: revelations from North Vietnam about its disinformation in the U.S. peace movement are still not widely grasped.

Finally, there is the popular level of political argument. Here, there's a very great difference between art and the world of taste, on the one hand, and politics and the world of common sense, on the other. In political matters, popular judgment tends to be reliable and sound, because it's based on common sense. Whereas common tastes are not always a good guide in the arts, common sense is typically a very good guide in politics. This difference allows us the possibility of effectively joining the high level of discourse with a commonsense understanding of power in the world. That is why "neoconservatives" seem to be in touch with popular opinion. We don't do nearly so well, though, on the middlebrow level, and I think that's where our problem lies.

This problem becomes acute because we now live in a highly ideological world. It is structurally ideological. Ours is now a world of communications, in which instant symbols, images, stories are conveyed to very large populations, and in which a speech by the President can make a big difference in a given week or a given month on a given issue. A world of symbols, images, and stories places a very high premium on ideology. If middlebrow "opinion-makers" don't have a sound ideology, capable of undergirding a realistic politics, then what can we expect of our politicians and political leaders? Those of us in the moral-intellectual-cultural sphere have an enormous responsibility.

In foreign policy, I would judge the lay of the land thus: the Democratic party has by and large forgotten the answer to the question raised in an essay by Reinhold Niebuhr forty some years ago, why is Communism so evil? To hear many Democrats talk, to judge by the letter sent by a group of them to the Sandinista leaders recently, one would imagine that Communism is a mild version of the New Deal.

The answer which Niebuhr gave to that question was that Marxism, being in practice a total concentration of power, means an elimination of liberty. But I think we have another answer today. We have learned that Marxists are incapable of peaceful co-existence. That fact changes the face of the world. If they were capable of peaceful co-existence, one sort of strategy would be possible; but since they are not, that strategy is impossible. Containment is not enough. Marxists have shown themselves incapable of peaceful coexistence not only because of their ideology, but even more because of the internal dynamics of their economics. They must attack aggressively because socialism doesn't work. If it worked as an economic system, peaceful co-existence might be possible. But since if you socialized the Sahara, in ten years there would be a shortage of sand, there is nothing left to them but to attack.

So the fundamental question for the Democratic party in foreign policy is, why is Marxism so evil? Democrats are too willing to be self-deceived by Marxism. They may understand aggression, as in Afghanistan. They may even understand subversion by the KGB. But they are unwilling to comprehend the Marxist strategy of guerrilla war, and the necessity of defeating that strategy.

The question for Republicans in foreign policy is, what is "social revolution"? I don't think you can motivate a population by saying it must resist Communism, at least in circumstances like those of Central America. There is some motivation in that, but I think finally there must be a positive theme, as there was in "making the world safe for democracy."

Republicans tend to get their experience in the economic sector; Penn Kemble earlier pointed out the greater strength of Democrats in the cultural sector. But Republicans also, it seems to me, tend to have a difficult time in foreign policy thinking politically. What are the political alternatives? It is not the case that we can be satisfied with traditional societies, based on the landed aristocracy in alliance with the military or the clergy.

The traditional societies, like the socialist societies, typically have very slow development and a very poor record on human rights. Together they make up perhaps 130 of the 160 nations on this planet. There are only twenty to thirty democracies with political economies one admires. We have forgotten the meaning of liberal revolution: that is, a revolution neither traditional nor socialist. In the case of El Salvador, the great danger that worries me, and the great fault of the Christian Democrats worldwide, is that they tend on questions of economics to be socialist, and you can guarantee that socialism isn't going to work economically. They're not going to get the development they need to build the kind of democracy they want.

The last point I want to make is on the domestic side. The fundamental problem--and here I disagree a bit with Penn Kemble--is that socialism does function as a kind of intellectual magnet for a great many people. Thus the typical response to the problem of poverty in our culture is to say that it is the fault of corporations, capitalism, the rich. It's surprising how far you can go on such demagoguery. There is a tremendous weakness for it in our culture, and I think it comes in part from the fact that even our conservatives have been anti-capitalists. From the "dark satanic mills" of Blake on through so many of our conservative writers, there has been an anti-capitalist, anti-corporation streak. (George Will describes himself as a stained-glass conservative, but I always call him a "rose trellis" conservative,

because he really does believe that Great Britain was a lovelier place when there was a rose trellis over every rural cottage--no floors, no privies, no glass in the windows, but then no asphalt, no credit cards, no massage parlors either.)

What's wrong with these attacks on the growth economy is that they fill us with illusion. Let me state the illusion in this way: we are told so often that the problem is poverty. I have hundreds of books and articles on what causes poverty. But that's the wrong question. Suppose you figured out the causes of poverty, then you would know how to make poverty. Terrific!

The interesting question is, how can you produce enough wealth to make sure the poor are lifted out of poverty? The minute you ask the question that way, everything looks different. You begin to see that punishing the rich won't necessarily help, particularly when you look at the 1982 tax figures and discover that those earning under $20,000 paid 1 1/2 percent less in their share of the tax burden than they did in 1981, and that those earning over $50,000 paid a 2 1/2 percent higher share. In short, we need a new way of talking about problems of wealth and poverty. Both political parties need that.

Ideological battles are always battles for the future. While I support the Coalition for a Democratic Majority and want to work with it, I do think we've made the mistake of imagining that our problem is keeping alive a tradition. That's like blowing on the coals to revive them rather than adding new wood, which is a very different proposition. I also think our habit of mind is to be critical sharpshooters. We're much better at poking holes in nonsense than we are at imagining a political program for the near future. I think that is going to be a problem for us.

Austin Ranney: Our question was, can the political system respond? Among the many things that have been said about it, I detect two different lines of thought. According to one, there is a system out there that is ready to go. What's wrong with it right now is that too much of it is in the wrong hands, and if we could only get their hands off and our hands on,

then everything would be much better. The second argument is that in some very real sense there isn't any system out there. Rather, there are a lot of little nodules of power exerting influence in a lot of different directions.

This tends to be my own picture of the situation. For example, I recently attended a meeting of about fifteen prime ministers and foreign secretaries from various countries in Africa. After we had been talking about various aspects of what was going on in American politics, it became clear they didn't want to talk about that. Instead, they wanted to know, what is American policy toward Africa? Well, as we started explaining, it became clear that there wasn't any single American policy toward Africa. The secretary of state wanted to do one thing, the President wanted to do something else, and the committees and subcommittees in the Senate and the House wanted to do something else. And that is what American policy, whether it be towards Central America or anything else, is like at any point in time.

What I would like to know from our panelists is whether there is a political system out there which, if only the right people can get control of it, will work just fine, or whether we must face the fact that there really isn't any system and that that is the most basic problem of all.

Eugene V. Rostow: Yes, there is a system out there. Our problems are not structural, in my opinion, but intellectual. Of course, the system is rather pluralist, as any democratic system should be, with plenty of room for play in the joints and for input from all over the place: from Congress, from the country, and from various parts of the executive establishment. But it is a system that's peculiar in the sense that it's a presidential system. The answer to the question of whether we can have a foreign policy is that it depends on the President, in whom the executive power is vested.

The reason why there is no American foreign policy at the moment is profound. It is that the country is still in a state of shock after Vietnam, which challenged the foreign policy we had had ever since the late 1940's, a policy that, as I remarked

before, we are still nominally pursuing. One of the constructive things about the presidential campaign this year is that we're seeing the Vietnam issue surfacing. There's been a series of comments in the Democratic primaries about the lessons of Vietnam, and it's becoming reasonably respectable to talk about the lessons of Vietnam. I hope that will continue into the presidential campaign this fall, because I can see no hope for having a foreign policy until we put Vietnam behind us and reach a national consensus on what the true lessons of that experience are.

That's why there's no foreign policy now, and why whatever we have is hesitant, half-hearted, and ambiguous. But that is a moral-intellectual problem for democratic debate, not a structural problem.

Laurence H. Silberman: After the Carter administration left office, Lloyd Cutler wrote an article in Foreign Affairs in which he argued that we needed a constitutional change in the United States because the political system could not respond. The tripartite structure set up by the Founders, he said, insured paralysis, and he therefore argued for a move towards a parliamentary system that would allow the President to win control of his party in Congress and push through his program. Throughout his article, Cutler used the word "balanced" to describe the kind of program he favored. What he really meant by balanced was what the left-of-center elites in Washington and New York thought was wise policy, and he was frustrated because the Carter administration had been unable to get that "wise policy" through.

I agree with Eugene Rostow. There is no need to change the structure. Look what the President accomplished in economic policy. Whether you agree with his program or not, in 1981-1982 he pushed through Congress a substantially new economic policy for the United States, based on a coherent set of ideas. He got it through, notwithstanding the unremitting hostility of the media and the elites that we all decry, because he had a clear idea and he was able to marshal his political forces.

On the foreign-policy side, Eugene Rostow is partly right, we have not yet gotten over Vietnam. But I think the key problem, which has prevented substantial coherence in foreign policy on the part of the administration, has to do with containment. Here Eugene Rostow and I would disagree. He believes basically that containment was always right, and if we just could get back to containment, we'd be alright. My own view is that containment had the seeds of its defeat in it from the beginning, because it was fundamentally only a defensive policy--ideologically it was only a defensive policy--and therefore it was eventually doomed to a Vietnam somewhere. Indeed, it can be argued that Vietnam was foreordained by the denouement of Korea.

In my view, the administration has struggled to come up with a foreign policy that is containment plus, that has an offensive element to it. Doing that is difficult, analytically and pragmatically, and it has certainly eluded a consensus within the administration and within the Republican party. But if the Republicans can get the same kind of coherence in foreign policy that they got in domestic policy, I think anything is possible. Bipartisanship in foreign policy often comes about only after you politically beat the other side into submission and force it to accept the basic premises of your policy.

Nelson W. Polsby: I think Eugene Rostow stated correctly and Laurence Silberman illustrated that the problems are not structural but intellectual. The reason it seems to me that we haven't got a coherent unified policy toward Africa is that Africa is not a homogeneous entity. It makes no sense to have a single policy toward something called Africa. You just naturally have to have a different policy toward Libya than you do toward South Africa and all the other places in between.

There is another issue lurking about and that is whether or not any sort of foreign policy is a failure if it doesn't win all the time. My view is that that is an unreasonable expectation for any policy. It is much too precipitate to claim that containment, that defensiveness, is the wrong sort of policy for a nation that wishes to make its bets on spontaneity in human affairs, in liberty, and in the free exercise of human nature.

Penn Kemble: I think there is a political system. I think those on the Left understand it better than we do because they realize that the culture is an integral part of it, and that unless you can establish your own base in the culture, you are not going to be able to hold what you can win in politics or anywhere else. I think it is up to people like us to begin to press that point wherever we can. What we need is a struggle for the culture.

Michael Novak: Obviously, there is an American "system," but from the very beginning it was based on a quite different proposition from most other political systems. So many other political systems are based on virtue: when you get a "new man," then the system will work. Our founders recognized the pervasiveness of human sin, and therefore deliberately fragmented the system. That is exactly how we want it to be; I don't think that is a disadvantage to us.

I agree with Penn Kemble. You could have made an argument in the nineteenth century that the economic part of our system was too powerful for the political part and for the moral-cultural part. And you could have made an argument from World War II onward that the political part of the system was becoming too strong for the economic part and the moral-cultural part. But today I think you have to say that the cultural parts of our system--the churches, the universities, journalism, the arts--are too strong. They breed too many illusions and false ideas, making it very difficult even for realists who do get a glimpse of what needs to be done to do it. We do have, therefore, a tremendous cultural struggle on our hands. It's a winnable struggle, I think, because the instincts, not only of most of the people, but of many in the culture are now with us. The beauty of the American interpretation of human life is that Americans don't believe in economic determinism or other sorts of determinism. We do believe in the capacities of free men and women to change their minds, to be out-argued, to change their actions. Most of us have done this in our own lifetime, so we know it is possible.

Eugene V. Rostow: I am glad to get a response to my initial comment about the fact that there is no

escape. There is no way out of the problem of trying to seek and build on a balance of power. I just want to make it clear that I fully agree with Laurence Silberman. I would not for a second confine foreign policy to containment and I'm heartily in favor of containment plus. I have been spending a good part of the last five or six years writing about almost nothing else. As Michael Novak and Penn Kemble said, we can't have a policy that would be devoid of aspirations or devoid of cultural content. Our foreign policy has to have large human, political, economic, and social dimensions--and, I would add, a more intensive effort than ever to control the nuclear demon. Containment plus should not be aggressive in the sense of trying to overturn the Russian Revolution of 1917, but it must be based on general compliance with the rules of world public order.

LUNCHEON ADDRESS

VLADIMIR BUKOVSKY

Introduction

Lucy S. Dawidowicz*

In 1963, when Vladimir Bukovsky was twenty-one and a student at the University of Moscow, he was arrested. He was charged with "processing and preparing anti-Soviet literature with the intent of distributing it." The particular item of anti-Soviet literature which put him in this predicament was an English copy of Milovan Djilas's book, The New Class. It had recently been published and Bukovsky had just borrowed it from the wife of an American journalist. Since she wanted the book returned the next day, he undertook to make a photographic copy so that he could read the book at his leisure.

For that crime he was sentenced, according to the system of Soviet justice, to a psychiatric hospital. Thenceforth Mr. Bukovsky was to spend some twelve years--more than a third of his life as a Soviet citizen--in prisons, labor camps, and psychiatric hospitals. He has described his macabre experiences in his autobiography, published a few years ago. It's called To Build a Castle--My Life as a Dissenter.

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I thought of presenting Vladimir Bukovsky to you as a jurist, though he never went to law school. For he is surely a premier expert on the Soviet Constitution and the vast accretion of the Soviet Criminal Code. He learned from his friend and fellow dissident, the mathematician Alexander Yesinin-Volpin, how to use Soviet law to defend the rights of the accused before their interrogators and in the courts. That indeed was the start of the movement for civil and human rights in the Soviet Union.

I had thought also of introducing Mr. Bukovsky to you as a Soviet penologist whose understanding of how the Soviet prison and punishment systems operate surpasses any analysis offered by Soviet academics or by professional criminologists and sociologists.

But Vladimir Bukovsky is, of course, more notable as a leading Russian dissident, whose struggle for the freedom to speak and write and to see justice done set him on a collision course with the Soviet authorities. After twelve years they were glad to get rid of him in exchange for a Chilean Communist.

Vladimir Bukovsky is above all a messenger and a witness. He is the messenger who speaks on behalf of those silent, yet not utterly silenced, multitudes he left behind in his motherland. He is also the living witness to the wicked crimes that are daily perpetrated there. He is our political conscience and even our political mentor.

To give shape and structure to his function as messenger and witness, he has co-founded Resistance International, an organization based in Paris, representing exiles from totalitarian countries. Its major tasks are to help the victims of those regimes, to assist democratic forces within them, and to fight Soviet totalitarianism.

"Keep Talking"

Vladimir Bukovsky

Exactly one hundred years before I was born, the great Russian writer Nikolai Gogol prophetically

described Russia as a troika rushing headlong with no apparent reason or purpose, just for the joy of fast driving:

"O troika, thou bird of a troika! Who was it that first thought thee up? It must have been a resourceful nation that gave thee birth in a land that brooks no nonsense, but has spread its plains, smoothly, evenly, over half of the world; and now go, count its milestones until everything is blurred before your eyes.

"And no elaborate job either is this contraption of a vehicle. No iron screws hold it together. An ax and a chisel--that was all a smart Yaroslav peasant needed to make it and fit it in a jiffy. The driver wears no German top boots: he is all beard and mittens, and he sits on--the Devil alone knows what it is he sits on. But the moment he has half-risen in his seat, has swung his whip and struck up a song, off shoot the horses like a whirlwind. . . .

". . . . And thou, Russia, art not thou, too, rushing headlong like the fastest troika that is not to be outdistanced? The road smokes under thee, the bridges rumble, everything falls back and is left behind. Lost in amazement at this, God's own miracle, stands the onlooker. Is this not a flash of lightning sent down from heaven? What is the meaning of this awe-inspiring onrush? What is the mysterious force that is contained in these steeds? O ye steeds, steeds--what steeds they are! Do whirlwinds dwell in your manes? Is every fiber of yours endowed with a quick, eager ear of its own? The moment you hear the familiar song above your heads, you strain your mighty chests of bronze, all as one, all at the same instant, and barely touching the earth with your hoofs, you become transformed into straight lines flying through the air, and the troika dashes along, all inspired by God. Russia, whither art thou speeding? Answer me! . . . She gives no answer. The jingle bells pour forth their wonderful peal, the air, torn to shreds, thunders and turns to wind. Everything on earth is flying past, and the other nations and states, eyeing her askance, make way for her and draw aside."

The contemporaries of Gogol were at a loss as to how to interpret such a strange prophecy. The Russia of their time was a fabulously immobile country; no

apparent rush was in evidence, nor even in prospect. Now, nearly one hundred and fifty years later, we have no difficulty in identifying the smallest details of the picture.

Who is so blind nowadays as not to recognize this contraption of a vehicle called "developed socialism," put together by a smart peasant in a great hurry of five-year plans and out of odd bits and pieces procured from foreign lands? Indeed, the Devil alone knows how the driver manages to hold on, beard, mittens, and all, when the horses dash along, and why the unwieldy carriage does not fall apart at the first bump.

And the steeds, those steeds. . . . Some steeds they are. I could write a whole poem about what these steeds think about the moment they hear above their heads the all too familiar song of proletarian solidarity and fraternal assistance, of eternal duty and the bright future. Their only hope is that the driver will somehow tumble down and break his neck as they strain their mighty chests, all at once.

Still, the trouble remains: nobody knows where she is speeding to. She still gives no answer, while continuing her awe-inspiring onrush through Asia, Africa, and Central America. And the other nations and states, being at their wits' end after trying all kinds of devices from containment to détente, still make way for her and draw aside.

Unfortunately, I could not find in nineteenth-century American literature anything equally prophetic and graphic to symbolize modern America. Perhaps I did not search long enough, but neither Mark Twain's steamboat on the Mississippi nor the great white whale of Melville satisfied me.

As I was fishing for an appropriate passage in the old books, I unwittingly looked out at the street--and there he was, our symbol in flesh and blood. Speeding recklessly along on roller skates was a middle-aged Californian (about 45 years old, I would say, judging by his grayish beard), in defiantly-red swimming trunks, his ears safely plugged by the earphones of a Walkman radio, his mouth steadily working as he chewed gum and blew bubbles. His eyes seemed to be the only part of his body not sufficiently pleased with its occupation, because they

expressed total amazement, as if asking, in that favorite American phrase, "What is going on here?" I guess this amazement would have disappeared if he could have watched television at the same time.

Outraged as some of you might be by this image of your country, the resemblance is too striking to deny. This great nation of pioneers and gold prospectors, this land of opportunity and tough competition, has been softened by a few decades of peace, prosperity, and social security. It has become obsessed with the pursuit of pleasure, comfort, and entertainment, as if to be happy is a constitutional obligation of its citizens. Irrespective of age, all Americans are supposed to be "kids" and the ultimate objective of their life is to have "fun."

The world may go to pieces, but the best-selling books in America will be about diet, health, sports, or sex. And to hell with the world, as long as "our boys" are not killed somewhere, or not involved in anything troublesome.

Like all egocentrics, Americans feel that the world exists only in their perception, and therefore the less they know about external troubles, the less they are troubled by them. It is not just ignorance, it is a deliberately created mental block. Consequently, external problems intrude on people's thinking only when the government becomes involved in them, or when they are thought to have been caused by the government.

Like all children, Americans are blissfully irresponsible and demanding, but they are also very generous. Quite consistent with this attitude is the popular notion of foreign policy as some sort of charity: if everything at home is in good shape, why shouldn't we help unfortunate people abroad? Nothing more sophisticated than a relief convoy or a few billion dollars. Perhaps an arms sale in the case of a very sentimental issue.

To sum up, Americans don't mind foreign policy if it does not require any effort or sacrifice on their part. They don't mind having the CIA as long as it does not do anything. They don't even mind having some sort of an army--after all, other nations have it too for some odd reason--but only on the condition that it is not going to be used anywhere and, above

all, that nobody gets hurt. In short, Americans view foreign relations as something mainly ceremonial and formal, like the Queen's visit to California, or as an extra holiday in Paris when the rate of exchange is favorable to the dollar.

Not surprisingly, those who manage now and then to tear themselves away from TV screens and earphones are divided into two unequal groups: the liberals and conservatives. I use these terms as they are used here, although I have never understood that usage. As my friend, the Russian poet Naum Korzhavin, once observed: "I am a liberal too, but I am a severe liberal."

The term liberalism in America does not mean anything similar to traditional European liberalism. In fact, it does not mean anything at all. It is an extreme case of mental aberration, which is best described by a Russian saying: it is like the dog who barks at his own family and wags his tail in front of a stranger.

Another peculiarity typical of American liberals is that they never know what they want, but they want it very badly. They are always well-organized and well-financed, and they are always campaigning. They are a minority but a very noisy one, and are always on the offensive, no matter what the cause might be.

And it is totally senseless to argue with American liberals: they will not listen to anybody or anything. Rather, they will try to silence their opponent by preventing his arguments from being published or aired, by character assassination, or by any other means reminiscent of the Cosa Nostra.

It would definitely be a mistake to call these people "left-wingers," at least in the European meaning of the word. European leftists are ideological and philosophical; so one can have an intelligent argument with them. They may agree or disagree with you, they can remain friends with you despite disagreements, and they may change their views under the pressure of arguments and events. In short, they have certain principles and ideas, they learn, and they develop their views according to what they have learned. Not so with American liberals, who are by and large the same as they used to be twenty or thirty years ago.

For example, even the Communists in Europe now reject the "Soviet model of socialism" and have no illusions about the aggressive nature of the Soviet system. Italian and Spanish Communists have even gone so far as to acknowledge the need for NATO. If nothing else, they need it to protect their own "model of socialism" from a Soviet diktat.

When I watch American television or look through American newspapers, I sometimes have the feeling of being transported thirty years into the past. How else should I feel when I see Professor George F. Kennan showing American viewers happy Soviet children, mothers with babies, and so on as proof of the Soviet Union's peaceful intentions? I certainly hope that Americans stand in no particular need to be persuaded by Mr. Kennan that the Soviet people have neither horns nor tails, but I am amazed that American liberals have not learned over all these decades to distinguish the people from the system in the Soviet Union.

At least the Europeans, even of the Left, remember that the Nazis could also be good husbands and loving fathers with happy children, could enjoy Bach and Mozart, and at the same time could exterminate Jews in the gas chambers. At least they, in Europe, are clever enough to listen to the stories of thousands of political refugees, coming in wave after wave, from the Soviet Union, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Vietnam, Cambodia, Ethiopia, etc.

Not so in America. A few months ago the Public Broadcasting System aired a remarkable film called The Russians Are Here. The producers of this film used every trick possible to distort the truth about refugees from the Soviet Union, presenting them as misfits, drunks, and, above all, as people who "regret" their decision to emigrate, who don't know what to do with their new freedom in America, and who even "miss the KGB," the very words used in the film by the narrator. The producers spent many weeks trying to locate the most bizarre characters out of some two hundred thousand recent emigrants; they spent miles of film to be able to cut the appropriate pieces out of lengthy interviews; and they managed to avoid a single case of a success--all to prove to the American people that the "Russians," as they persistently call the Soviet Jews who recently immigrated to this country, are generally happy with the regime back

home; that those they left behind do not deserve anything better; and that therefore the American public should not worry too much when news comes about repressions in the USSR. This outrageous forgery was made with public money and shown repeatedly all over the country, despite vehement protests from the refugee communities. Yet if someone were to make a similar movie about Hispanics or about emigrants from, say, Chile, he would be crucified by the press for instigating national hatred, for persecuting a national minority; he would be sued in court for millions--all by the very same liberals.

No, American liberals will never learn anything. They are here to teach us about ourselves, not to learn.

Actually, anything can become a liberal cause in America, provided it goes against common sense. What is really remarkable about liberals is that they are always completely wrong. But it is equally remarkable that such persistently wrong judgment does not affect their credibility. No matter what, they are never held responsible for their mistakes, they still command moral authority, they are still a shining example of humanity.

Did they not assure us that the Vietcong had nothing to do with the Communists? That they were just "nationalists" fighting for their country's independence? These over-sophisticated intellectuals of the New York Times, CBS, etc., had been shouting at the top of their voice for decades that their opponents were "too simplistic" in their political assessments. Did they not assure us that the PLO was just a patriotic organization with no Soviet connections? Did they not insist that Americans were the aggressors and should withdraw from Southeast Asia without worrying about a "domino effect"? And where are these advisors now? They are once again advising us that the Central American guerrillas are different from all others, and that there will be no "domino effect" in Central America, no new Communist strongholds or bases, no totalitarian oppression.

The very same people assured us that Castro was a "true revolutionary," that Angola was not a Communist state, that Cuban troops in Angola were just "stabilizing" the situation there. They assured President Carter that the Sandinistas were not

Communists and that therefore America must help them. They persuaded Carter that the Shah must leave Iran and that there would be no revolution. Millions have died or lost their homelands because of their judgment and moralizing. But they don't give a damn for the future of these nations. And they are never responsible for the rivers of blood and mountains of corpses produced by their progressive proteges around the world.

But what about the majority, the conservatives? Unfortunately, it is still a silent majority. If the liberals always want something very badly, the traditional, classic conservatives simply do not want anything from this world, except for it to remain just as it is. They may grumble, watching the frenzied activities of the liberals, they may complain to each other about liberal bias in the media, but try to get them to organize, to get them into the streets, or even to vote for a conservative candidate when the weather is rainy.

For example, we all know how dangerous the so-called nuclear freeze campaign, the non-first-use campaign, and the numerous other peace campaigns aimed at disarming the United States and exposing it to unrestrained Soviet blackmail might become. We also understand, I hope, that at present the peace movements need only substantial financial support to make their campaigns an important political factor, given the fabulous naivete of our 45-year-old baby on roller skates. And indeed, on March 25, 1984 the New York Times published an article, "Philanthropies Focus Concern on Arms Race," which disclosed with remarkable frankness a conspiracy of the biggest American foundations to make "the prevention of nuclear war [in] the 80's what civil rights was to the 60's." Since these words belong to Mr. William Dietel, president of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, we can be quite sure that the tens of millions of dollars designated by his foundation, the Carnegie Corporation, Ford Foundation, MacArthur Foundation, George Gund Foundation, etc., are not going to be spent promoting the idea of a stronger defense policy. Thus, we have been warned in advance that a huge effort is underway to brainwash the American public into accepting Soviet blackmail.

And what do conservatives plan to counter this massive effort to manipulate public opinion? Do they reach for their checkbooks and try to match this

gigantic liberal fund-raising campaign dollar for dollar? Do they mobilize activist groups across the country, in every town and on every campus? Do they organize lectures, work-shops, petitions, rallies, exhibitions, festivals, media events? Of course not. A few years from now, they will sit around and grumble, they will blame the liberal media, popular ignorance, and Soviet agents, anybody but themselves.

The problem with conservatives is that they believe the truth is self-evident and does not need to be marketed, advertised, or otherwise promoted. Moreover, the mere word "propaganda" makes them shudder in disgust, just as the word "nuclear" makes liberals furious. Unfortunately, nobody can disinvent either nuclear power or ideological warfare.

The twentieth century, with its industrial revolution and technological progress, has irrevocably changed the life of human society. In the military and strategic fields, it has provided us with the means of mass destruction, thus placing a far greater responsibility upon everyone. In everyday life, it has provided us with comfort and security, thus making us soft and vulnerable by enforcing our conformist tendencies. But most importantly, it has created means of mass communication, mass media, and therefore mass culture, mass psychology, or whatever you wish to call it.

As a result of these innovations, we all are close neighbors now irrespective of the geographic location of our countries. It takes only about fifteen minutes for a missile to reach the opposite side of the globe. It takes only a fraction of a second for news to reach the same destination. Strictly speaking, there is no such thing as purely internal affairs anymore.

What is so often overlooked in this development is the fact that political tools have also changed. We live in an era of ideological wars, with mass ideologies, mass propaganda, and mass movements being their indispensable instruments. Sovereignty and national borders, war and diplomacy, peace and stability--all these nineteenth-century notions have become obsolete. The nuclear weapon is not a weapon in the strictly military meaning of the word, but a huge psychological factor in the ongoing ideological war. War itself is no longer a military confrontation of

nations, with its front and rear; it is anything from popular unrest to terrorism and guerrilla movements. And the battlefield of this war does not coincide with the national borders of states, but goes right through people's minds, be they in Ohio or Siberia. What is peace, what is stability in this context? They have lost any meaning. Stability of what? Of a concentration camp, or of Fifth Avenue? What do we mean by peace? A continuation of the "class struggle" and "liberation," the triumph of Islam, the capitulation of democracy?

The trouble is that Americans in general and conservatives in particular stubbornly refuse to accept the political consequences of technological progress, that very progress to which their country contributed more than any other nation. They simply refuse to enter the twentieth century politically.

The Communists were the first to grasp these new realities and to utilize the opportunities they offer. They have mastered the art of ideological war to the point of perfection. Their ultimate goal may be absurd, their concept of history may be ridiculous, their methods unscrupulous and cruel, but they match perfectly the socio-political environment of the twentieth century, as an epidemic of plague befitted the Middle Ages.

One can say a lot of bad things about Comrade Lenin, but he was a genius of a tactician, and he was the first to think up this contraption of a vehicle which still rumbles across the continents. Sixty years after his death, the Soviet Union is still very much the same ideological state, serving the purposes of world revolution, as it was conceived at the turn of the century. Never mind that nobody believes nowadays in Communist ideology. In the everyday life of the Soviet people it can be perceived as a nuisance, and it can provide a source of the numerous jokes shared equally by the people and by their rulers. But at the end of the day, the Communist party is still in firm control of every aspect of Soviet life, and Communist ideology is never challenged within the party.

What was once a utopia, a dream, became a structure, an institution, and an everyday job for millions of people. They might hate it whole-heartedly, but there is no other choice for those born in the Soviet

Union: you must either be a part of the system, or be locked up till death comes to your rescue. And the famous troika is still rushing onward, its horses cursing the driver, its driver cursing the horses, and together they curse the damned foreigners who so obligingly make way for them and draw aside.

Usually the difference between professionals and amateurs is defined in terms of payment. Thus, people say, professionals are those who are paid for their work, while amateurs do it for fun. In my view, this definition is too superficial. People in the State Department or in the CIA are paid, but are they professionals? Let me give a better definition: professionals hate their job, but they do it well; amateurs enjoy what they are doing, but they do it badly.

A friend of mine once overheard a conversation in the Moscow subway between a major and a captain, two quite ordinary guys going home to their wives and kids after a long day in the office.

"You know," said the major, "I still can't get over the unfair treatment you've received. Just think, you worked on that damned Ethiopia for three years, and just when things started to move, they replaced you with this fool with connections. And now that the people you found, prepared, and promoted in Ethiopia have come to power after making a 'glorious revolution,' this fool has been promoted to major--and you are still a captain. What a dirty deal."

Tomorrow, this deeply offended captain may defect to the West and come to New York. He will display a remarkable knowledge of the advantages of democracy upon arrival--no need to educate him about the great American liberties. He knew about them all along, while masterminding a bloody revolution in Ethiopia, while professionally subverting those very liberties. But as long as he remains in the Soviet Union, he will do his job very well. He is probably doing it right now, being responsible for El Salvador, as a matter of duty. He hates it, but he is doing it well.

The Soviet system is a gigantic professional machine of subversion which has trapped two hundred and seventy-five million people. Of course, it is not perfect and it makes mistakes occasionally, but who here can exploit these mistakes? It plans policy some

twenty years in advance with considerable precision, and your response must be equally precise and well-planned to be successful. But what do we have here? A bunch of very nice amateurs, a sloppy system of policy-making which is all chaos and sporadic reactions to yesterday's events. No long-term concept, no policy, just reactions when the trouble becomes too apparent.

This is not to say that you lack gifted people, or that they never produce good ideas. To cite a few examples, the Zero Option, the withdrawal from UNESCO, and the threat to exile the United Nations to Moscow were brilliant ideas. But they have never been developed into an effective guiding principle.

To begin with, it seems that nobody in this vast apparatus seriously knows what he wants from the Soviet Union. I once put this question to several friends working in different branches of the American government and all of them came up with different answers. One said it would be just fine if the Soviets left us alone; yet others wanted to see the Soviets lose their grip over Eastern Europe, or even start respecting human rights. But nobody has ever tried to establish whether the Soviets could really do any of these things.

Then again, there seems to be total disagreement on what the Soviets want from us. Are they really frightened and paranoiac, as some believe, or are they still carrying out Lenin's plan of world revolution? Or are they doing something else?

Is it not amazing that at a time when we are capable of studying elementary particles, when we can interfere with the genetic code of organisms, when we understand the smallest mechanisms of nature and can send a man into outer space, we still don't know the answers to questions vital to our survival, and leave them to the discretion of those least capable of finding the answers? Just a few thousand miles from us, there is a political system which has entrapped several hundred million people for half a century, which backs up every enemy we might have, which can destroy the globe five times over, and we still do not know what its rulers want from us or what we want from them.

Meanwhile, numerous negotiations are conducted and agreements are signed between these two systems without a clear understanding of either sides' objectives. Nobody even knows for sure whether the terminology used in these agreements has the same meaning for both sides. And no sooner are they signed than--lo and behold!--they are violated by the Soviets. But do we ever declare these violated agreements null and void? Of course not. Instead, we rush to the negotiating table to start all over again. Why?

In the absence of any concept, American foreign policy vis-à-vis the Soviet Union is governed by a few "golden rules" created out of fear, impotence, and frustration:

1. "Keep talking"--the most golden among these rules and definitely the most absurd. Can anybody prove that to keep talking is better than to quit talking? Are there any facts to support this rule? Did anybody try not to keep talking? Of course not. Unfortunately, this rule is not just an innocent stupidity. On the one hand, it implies that the organic differences between democratic and totalitarian societies could be solved by a negotiated settlement. This is a very misleading notion. It misrepresents the East-West conflict as a sort of tragic misunderstanding which will be dispelled as soon as we "engage in a constructive dialogue," "sit down and talk," and follow other liberal nonsense calculated to lay blame on the Western side for not trying to "understand" the poor Soviets.

On the other hand, it deprives the West of the much-needed flexibility and initiative in choosing when to talk and when not to, under what conditions and with what purpose in mind, while leaving the Soviets under no obligation to "keep talking." As a result, American policy becomes a hostage to Soviet interests and comes to depend on the Soviets' "approval." The success of American policy is judged by the number of "talks," "dialogues," and "agreements" concluded between the two sides, by the number of concessions made to the Soviets, not by the Soviets. This rule also confuses the notion of what are "normal" relations between East and West. If American policy serves Soviet interests very well, and the Soviets deign to have a "dialogue," then relations are said to be "normalizing."

Underlying this strange rule is an ordinary fear: it is too scary not to keep talking. Just as a frightened child lost in the deep woods starts talking loudly to calm himself down and to dispel the dark shadows, Americans believe that by talking to the Soviets they will dispel the threat of war.

To add insult to injury, a second golden rule comes into play as soon as the talks are started:

2. "Better something than nothing." Perhaps it would not do any harm to follow this rule when dealing with other democratic countries, or within a democratic society. However, when dealing with the Soviets or their likes, this is a sure way to be mugged: they will get whatever they want from you in exchange for something neither you nor they care about. Still, Americans will be celebrating an achievement: after all, they have got "something" from the Soviets, and something is surely better than nothing.

But even this "something" is not likely to be delivered by the Soviets, and with no apparent consequences for their international relations, because as soon as their cheating becomes obvious the next golden rule takes over:

3. "We should not demand too much from the Russians, we should not push them into a corner." In practical terms, it means that we should not demand anything, even what was promised by them under an international agreement. Meanwhile, our side should, of course, continue to deliver: after all, we are civilized people and cannot imitate Soviet behavior, can we?

Thus, even when the Soviets manage to get themselves in a really tough corner--when they make a really serious mistake and the moment comes to force them into a retreat, to make them pay back whatever they have previously grabbed--our Western "professionals" cry out, all as one:

4. "Leave them a Golden Bridge, let them save face." And everybody rushes to help save the Soviets' face more eagerly than they ever tried to save their own. I do not remember a single case where the Soviets have actually used this ready-made "Golden Bridge" or showed any interest in "saving face" and

retreating. Why should they? The West will always provide a good excuse for them, and it will never try to exploit their most obvious mistakes. With such enemies, who needs friends?

So the vicious circle is thus completed: we have talked at the wrong moment, we have got ourselves into a bad agreement, we have refused to call the Soviets to account for obvious violations of this bad agreement, and we have even covered-up their violations. What is next?

5. "Keep talking."

My description of American foreign policy will look too optimistic unless I say a few words about the American foreign-policy-making mechanism. For even with the egocentrism of the American public, misdirected activism of liberals, and passivity of conservatives, with all the incredible dilettantism of American politicians and diplomats, one might still hope that better judgment will finally prevail. This hope, however, quickly vanishes as one becomes familiar with the American policy-making mechanism.

If a mathematician decides one day to put this mechanism in the form of an equation, he will be obliged to write a lot of symbols and figures on one side, and a zero on the other. The American political system, in its present form, is pathologically incapable of making any meaningful decisions, being at the same time enormously complicated. Different decision-making bodies made to "balance" each other in fact simply obstruct each other's work and cancel out each other's effort, with 99.9 percent of their time being spent on internal struggles. I suppose very little would change if one day the whole foreign-policy-making mechanism were eliminated. But even that is impossible to achieve and the system remains deadlocked forever.

This system, conceived in the eighteenth century with the explicit purpose of avoiding foreign entanglements (that is, of avoiding having any foreign policy), has safely carried America through nearly two hundred years primarily because it was possible for the country to remain isolated during that time. But with the advance of our age, even Americans were forced to react somehow to the external world. As a result, the system became more and more complex until

it reached its ideal: namely, a condition of permanent constipation.

I don't know who was the first to convince Americans that democracy means decision by consensus, but the man was obviously a good practical joker. Nowhere else in the world is it interpreted this way. Moreover, I cannot imagine any political or social problem which could be solved by consensus. A problem of that nature means, by its very definition, a certain social or political disagreement. In other words, if there is a problem, there is no consensus; and if there is a consensus, there is no problem.

Now, bearing in mind the peculiarities of the existing political forces described above, what sort of a consensus might one expect?

In practical terms, the policy-making mechanism operates only with incredible inconsistency, because any decision must be the result of a certain deal between opposing forces. Thus, American foreign policy will at the same time advance the cause of socialism in Africa, while opposing the spread of socialism in Latin America. It will expose Soviet violations of international treaties one day, while the next day it will advocate new rounds of negotiations with the very same Soviet Union. It will support anti-Communist forces in Nicaragua, but only on the condition that they should not be too successful and, God forbid, topple the Communist government.

Consensus is an obsession of the American bureaucracy, a means of self-protection, and a device to avoid any responsibility. So much so that in any decision-making body there must be a "balanced representation" of the clever and stupid, the knowledgeable and ignorant, of all kinds of groups and trends whether they are relevant or not. And even if only one out of a hundred disagrees, the rest are supposed to find a compromise to satisfy that one. As a result, decisions are made not to solve a given problem, but to reconcile the different interests of all these groups and trends; and a decision is often turned into the opposite of the initial proposal by the numerous conditions, stipulations, and limitations attached to it.

The same principle of consensus has been incorporated into the administrative structure. Thus, no

matter who wins the elections, both sides will have an equal influence on decision-making. The power to decide has become so widely distributed among different departments and institutions, the process itself has become so slow and bureaucratic, that years and years may pass by before the problem is safely buried under mountains of contradictory decisions.

In the process of this absolute democratization, the distinction between the executive and legislative power has been totally lost. It has reached the point where a covert operation must be approved by seven congressional committees and subcommittees before it can be carried out. And who needs such a covert operation after it has been leaked to the press forty-nine times? The legislators even decide such questions as what sort of weapons can or cannot be used in a covert action, where the soldiers should shoot and at what time of day. Therefore, those who bear the responsibility for an action have no authority to plan it, and those who bear no responsibility are in command.

In short, it is a total mess. We have a propaganda department, with a $1.5 billion budget, which is explicitly forbidden to make any propaganda. We have "subversive" radio stations with a budget of $100 million which are categorically forbidden to engage in subversive broadcasting. We have an executive branch which is constantly chastised for the decisions made by congressional subcommittees. We have a conservative government elected by a clear majority of the population which nevertheless is in constant fear of what the New York Times might say about it. We have armed forces which are not forces at all but a vulnerability as soon as they are sent anywhere. And we still have no foreign policy, no concept, not even an inkling of what must be done to stop that crazy troika which threatens to knock down everything on its way.

Who said that this is democracy? This is bureaucratic incompetence covered up by democratic phraseology. Democracy is just majority rule, not a consensus. Why are we so afraid of saying a clear "no" to those we disagree with? Let them win the elections first and then work out their decisions, their foreign policy.

Why were the British, the oldest living democracy in Europe, able to send their troops seven thousand miles from home and score a spectacular victory in the Falklands with calmness, precision, and no leaks to the press, no hysteria about "our boys" being killed, no subcommittees' investigations?

I can tell you why. I will never forget what Margaret Thatcher said just before she was scheduled to appear at a public meeting a few years ago. When she arrived, an extremely noisy crowd started shouting protests and abuse. A TV reporter approached her at the entrance to the meeting hall and asked: "Mrs. Thatcher, what is your reaction to these protests?" She looked around as if a bit surprised and not quite sure what the reporter was asking about. "Oh, you mean this," she said. "Why should I care? These people don't belong to my supporters. And I thank God they don't."

DISCUSSION

Norman Podhoretz: I've been called in to pinch hit for Austin Ranney, who had to leave on personal business. I'm going to begin this session by calling on two people. The first is Irving Kristol, who has something to say about Eugene Rostow's spirited description and refutation of his global unilateralist heresy.

Irving Kristol: I think Eugene Rostow finds it very difficult to understand what those of us who talk about unilateralism mean by it, since it really is not the kind of American foreign policy that has been debated now for more than half a century. That is to say, it is not liberal internationalism and it is not isolationism, left or right.

The best way to describe it is this: it is the kind of foreign policy we would have if Theodore Roosevelt were President. We have to go back that far to have a conception of what a unilateralist foreign

policy might mean. What it means is that the President mobilizes public opinion at home in support of his policies--and he has to be able to articulate his policies in such a way as to do that--and then he acts swiftly and, one hopes, successfully, in which case the American people will certainly support him, media or no media.

Our problem at the moment is that we are immobilized by the alliances we have built up, and the commitments we have built up to the United Nations, over the past thirty-five years. Every time we want to do something, we have allies who will explain to us why it is very bad for us to do it.

The examples are almost too numerous to go into here, but, to take one issue on which Mr. Rostow is an expert, consider arms-control negotiations with the Soviet Union. There is no reason for poor Ed Rowny to be sitting in Geneva waiting for a Soviet phone call. The Soviets know where to reach him when they want to talk. There is no reason for our being in any kind of arms negotiations with the Soviet Union, since at the moment there is no evidence that the Soviet Union wants to negotiate over arms control. If the Soviets want to negotiate over arms control, they will let us know. We are there negotiating on arms control only because our European allies insist we go there, and they insist we go there for their own domestic political reasons. So we go, and they begin to nag us and criticize us and say, "You're not doing enough in the way of negotiating on arms control and you're being too belligerent and you're not making enough concessions."

My view is very simple. So far as Western Europe is concerned, and so far as arms-control negotiations for Western Europe are concerned, let the Europeans negotiate. I see no reason why we should be in those negotiations at all. It's their countries. They are the ones who should be negotiating with the Russians, instead of setting us up like a patsy so that Helmut Kohl and others can then criticize us for not being sufficiently attentive to problems of disarmament. Obviously, we should negotiate disarmament of any kind with the Soviet Union when the Soviet Union wants it. When the Soviets do not want it, there is no point in our pretending that we somehow have a magic formula for making them want it.

There are many other issues where we should go it alone, take unilateral action which in the end would mobilize our allies behind us. What we want are allies who act with us, not allies who are constantly frustrating our action, which is what they now do. In Central America, in Western Europe, in the Middle East--every time we want to do something, some of our allies will explain to us why it really would not be a good idea, why it would be very upsetting. Practically all of our allies, with the possible exception of Israel, are risk-aversive. They don't want to take any risks in foreign affairs. This is especially true of our allies in Western Europe.

In the case of Central America, it is an absolute scandal that our Western European allies have not been supporting us. They have no right not to support us in Central America. That is an area of primary interest to us. It is an area of no interest to them. They do not have the moral right, and I would say they should not have the political right, to give economic aid to Nicaragua, which they are doing, or to withhold support for us at the United Nations, which they are most definitely doing.

We should make it clear to them that if they expect aid from us, in case it is needed for the defense of Western Europe, we expect support from them. Our membership in NATO and our commitment to the defense of Western Europe should be conditional on their supporting us in Central America when we need their support and ask for that support. That is the way a great power behaves. We are not behaving like a great power; we're behaving like one member of a coalition. As Vladimir Bukovsky put it so nicely at lunch, we are constantly seeking consensus. Constantly seek consensus with your allies, and you end up being immobilized.

I believe the United States should start acting like a great power, should start doing what it thinks is necessary. We are not that weak. Our population is the same as the Soviet Union's. We are, I'm convinced, as strong as the Soviet Union, not necessarily in every area or every military sense, but that's not crucial. We're not going to be confronted by the Soviet Union in every area of the world or necessarily in any outright military sense. If we act decisively on our own, our allies will in the end fall in behind us, since what alternative will they have?

If they don't fall in behind us, then what kind of allies are they? An alliance is based on mutuality of interest. We keep subordinating our interest to the interest of our allies in the search for consensus. That is why American foreign policy for the past forty years has been such an incredible mess.

Norman Podhoretz: I think this issue is sufficiently important and represents a sufficiently significant disagreement within our own political community as to warrant further explorations. So I'm going to give Eugene Rostow the more or less last word on the question.

Eugene V. Rostow: If unilateralism means the policy that Theodore Roosevelt would be preaching and following if he were President today, I am entirely for it. He was a brilliant man, an extraordinary man, a first-class President, and I am absolutely sure he would be the leading supporter of the NATO concept as well as of our security relations with the Japanese. His participation in both the Agadir crisis and the Portsmouth conference is evidence enough about his perception and his methods.

Irving Kristol suggests that we are being immobilized by consultations with our allies or consultations in the UN. This is simply not true. It is a common excuse through which we try to exculpate ourselves. If our allies disagree with us about Central America, which I deplore just as much as Irving Kristol does, I would remind him, in the spirit of the story I told earlier, that we disagreed with France and Britain on two absolutely fundamental issues in the past thirty years: Indo-China in 1954 and the handling of the Suez crisis of 1956. In retrospect, I think we would all agree that Eisenhower should have gone into Indo-China while the French had 500,000 troups there, and that our position at Suez was a folly. There are very bitter and strong memories as a consequence of these American mistakes.

The notion that we could make our aid to NATO or support of NATO conditional on behavior of the kind Irving Kristol described brings out the very point I was trying to make. We're not in NATO ultimately as

an act of friendship or consensus. We're there to keep an absolutely vital area, from the strategic point of view, out of Soviet hands. We should say that to ourselves over and over again.

As far as the Middle East is concerned, European allies didn't frustrate us there. We had a European force in Lebanon and an enormous opportunity. For the first time in a very long time we had agreement on the Lebanese affair. Our wounds there were entirely self-inflicted.

So I'm unpersuaded by what Irving Kristol has said, much as I admire him in general. I think it's a point of sufficient importance for us to focus on and to spend a good deal of time on. I agree with him completely that our foreign policy recently has not been in the hands of people in whose veins the blood of Pitt, Palmerston, Disraeli, John Quincy Adams, or Dean Acheson runs.

Norman Podhoretz: That's a lot of blood. Now I'd like to call on Walter Berns.

Walter Berns:* I want to bring up a subject that I thought would have been on the agenda of the panel this morning, but which was sedulously avoided. There are four nominal presidential candidates: on the Republican side, Ronald Reagan; on the Democratic side, Walter Mondale, Gary Hart, and Jesse Jackson. I use the term nominal because it's quite clear that one of these candidates, Jesse Jackson, is not a candidate for President of the United States. He is running for some other reason.

If one were to begin to wonder about this, I suppose one would turn to the April 1984 issue of Commentary and read Arch Puddington's discussion of this phenomenon. Jesse Jackson is up to something. What he is up to has profound consequences for the foreign policy of the United States. I think it would be appropriate, therefore, for the panel to wonder about how the system or how the parties or how any of us should respond to him.

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Quite clearly the other Democratic candidates are not responding properly. I suspect they will not respond properly at the Democratic convention. I expect Jesse Jackson to stay one step ahead of the Democratic party with his demands. What he ultimately intends to do, whether he intends to persuade black people not to vote in this election, I don't know.

It perhaps is unreasonable to expect the black leaders of this country properly to respond to him. They are afraid to oppose him, and, with Louis Farrakhan lurking in the shadows behind him, they probably have reason to be afraid.

That leaves the Republican party. That means perhaps Ronald Reagan, and those people in the White House who spend their time advising the President of the United States primarily with a view to his re-electability in mind.

I think this is a proper subject for this panel, the title of which is, "Can the system respond?" Can we respond to this dangerous phenomenon?

Nelson W. Polsby: The blood of Louis Brandeis is running in the veins of the Democratic party. He once said, "Sometimes the best thing we do is not doing." I believe that the principle of transferability that Walter Berns raises--that Jesse Jackson can, in effect, order registered voters who are black, and who are registered in part because of enthusiasm for him, not to vote against Ronald Reagan in November--probably will not hold. We haven't any experience in this country of political leaders being able to transfer their popularity to other candidates.

Secondly, I think it's simply not the case that there are foreign-policy implications of the Jackson candidacy. What we've had is a tiny example of something that the Logan Act never contemplated, namely, the meddling in American electoral politics by hostile foreign leaders, with Jackson as their vehicle. This falls short of foreign-policy implications for the Jackson candidacy.

Laurence H. Silberman: I think Walter Berns is right and Nelson Polsby is wrong. The Jackson phenomenon is

very serious and it has enormous foreign-policy implications.

I would like to say, first, the Republicans have clean hands on this. George Bush, in a speech in Washington, not only attacked Jackson for what he was saying, but castigated Mondale and Hart for being quiet, assiduously and pusillanimously quiet, about Jackson. Thereafter, Mondale certainly, and to a lesser extent Hart, felt obliged to condemn Jackson, at least for his refusal to disavow Farrakhan.

But a more serious point is that Jackson is seeking very hard to inject a crypto-Marxist, Third-World ideology into Democratic party doctrine. That's not to say we haven't seen ideological extremism before in the Democratic party. But Jackson goes much further. And what makes his ideological effort so serious is that he identifies it with race. Blacks and other so-called Third-Worlders in the United States, he says, should have greater tolerance for Marxist or even Marxist-Leninist ideology in the Third World.

I find that enormously troubling even though I'm quite convinced it will redound to the benefit of the Republicans in this election. I think the health of any industrial democracy depends on how sound its liberal party is, and I find Jackson's interjection into the Democratic party very dangerous in the long term.

Penn Kemble: At perhaps some risk of identifying myself with special interests, I would like to point out that so far as I know there is only one organization composed of blacks in political affairs, called Black Trade Unionists for Mondale, which has been organizing people and speaking out in the black community about the dangers the Jackson campaign presents.

Stephen H. Balch:* It seems to me that the problem that democracies have, both in recognizing an external

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threat and working up the resolve to deal with it, may be inherent in the nature of democratic institutions. I say that because, obviously, it is a problem not only with the United States, but with most of our allies. It was also a problem when Britain was the leading active representative of the liberal democracies of the world between the wars.

I think it may be a problem inherent in democratic institutions for two reasons. The first has to do with the success of democratic institutions in creating a social order in which people deal with each other in a civilized way, in which controversies are argued out rather than fought out, in which people compromise, in which people think of each other as individuals with certain sets of rights that have to be respected. If, either as an average citizen or a potential political leader, you are socialized in that kind of political environment, you will be terribly ill-equipped to understand the way the world works outside. It strikes me that both our leaders and our citizens constantly show every sign of having been, in a sense, miseducated by the success of their own system.

Secondly, it seems that foreign-policy issues could be talked about as issues that have diffuse rather than concentrated consequences for the public. That is, the success or failure of a foreign policy affects everybody more or less in the United States and not just one particular sector of the public. Now when one particular sector of the public is affected, there is some incentive for people to organize along traditional interest-group lines and try to put pressure on the government to deal with the problem. But where everybody is affected, usually the traditional interest-group structure does not develop. What happens instead is that politics is left up to ideological types who are frequently actuated by strange, fantastic visions of things. That seems to be an affliction that can be found both in the United States and Europe.

I'm wondering whether the panel agrees with this estimate and, if so, what we can do to address the situation.

Nelson W. Polsby: I do agree with that assessment, but I don't know what to do about it.

David Schimel:* I think we have danced around the real issue that divides us between Democrats and Republicans, conservatives and liberals, and that is that we are fighting Marxism not just as a political idea, but as an economic idea. We have a better, though imperfect, alternative that has proven far more successful than any other idea in this world, and that is economic freedom. So containment plus means opposing the spread of Communism and at the same time pushing the idea of economic freedom.

But that presents a problem for those so-called liberals or Democrats who are basically statist in their own economic view of the world. How are they going to be effective in fighting a statist ideology like Marxism if they are statists themselves? There is, it seems to me, a contradiction there. Until we straighten that out among ourselves, our foreign policy is always going to be confused to a certain degree.

Penn Kemble: I am skeptical of holistic medicine. I think there is a disease in the Democratic party. It's a disease of misunderstanding about the threat of totalitarianism. I think there are remedies for that. But I don't think a cure for that disease is served by tying it to a total ideology. My own judgment is that there is no contradiction between what Sidney Hook has called the democratic faith and support for vigorous government. I think there is much evidence that there is no contradiction. There are certainly many arguments that we can hold among ourselves about where government is helpful. But I don't think that in order to solve the crisis of the totalitarian temptation one needs to embrace a kind of free-market economics that sees virtually all government as a threat and a burden.

Eugene V. Rostow: I don't think economics, interesting as it is, should be emblazoned on our flag when we decide what beyond containment we are offering. I suggest that the right words to be emblazoned on that flag are "freedom under law."

*Attorney, New York City.

Norman Podhoretz: I can't resist quoting a remark that Morris Raphael Cohen once made when he was accused of being too negative. This applies to criticisms that have been made of the Committee for the Free World. Cohen once said, "Nobody ever asked Hercules to refill the Augean stables."

Michael Novak: Even Qaddafy calls his country a popular, democratic republic. Well, it's none of the three. My point is that everybody says he is in favor of democracy. But the claim of the totalitarians who are socialist is that it is capitalism that has to be destroyed. That's the point of their attack. And until we face up to the fact that they are not attacking our democracy but our economic system, we will be missing something important on the flag Eugene Rostow spoke of. "Liberal" means both the political and the economic parts of political economy.

A. Lawrence Chickering:* My sense is that much of the paralysis in foreign policy is rooted in uncertainty about when and under what circumstances we can deploy conventional forces in an age preoccupied with the idea of nuclear escalation.

I remember around 1970, Walt Rostow was on "Firing Line." At one point in the show, discussing Vietnam, he said that whenever he had a discussion with radical students a point would be reached when they would finally say, "Well, if it was really all that important, why didn't you go in and clean it up?"

Part of the reason why we didn't go in and clean it up, it seems to me, was a concern about escalation in a nuclear age. The possibility of escalation compels policy-makers to keep wars limited. The paradox is that in some cases the only way to keep them limited is to make them unlimited, to protract them indefinitely, avoiding actions that will bring them quickly to an end. In Grenada, where we brought things quickly to an end, we had an immediate success and overwhelming public support. But in Central America or the Middle East or any number of other

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places, where our engagement seems indefinite, the public simply won't support deployment.

My question is, how can we deploy conventional forces abroad to gain the success people will demand as the initial price of deploying them, without intolerable risks of nuclear escalation?

Eugene V. Rostow: The question Mr. Chickering raises is, of course, fundamental. I have been writing and speaking a great deal about it in the last couple of years because of my involvement in the nuclear problem and in nuclear negotiations. There isn't any doubt that the object of Soviet policy in the nuclear field is to build up such an overwhelming lead--especially in the class of ground-based ballistic missiles, the most dangerous and destructive of all nuclear weapons--as to neutralize the West and to make it impossible for the United States and the Western powers generally to use conventional forces in dealing with aggression in the Third World or even in Europe or Japan.

In other words, the fear of nuclear escalation as an inhibiting factor in foreign policy and in the use of conventional forces is the fundamental problem. That's what the Cuban missile crisis in 1962 was all about. There was no danger of nuclear weapons being used in the Cuban missile crisis because the disparity of forces was too great. We would have used conventional forces to invade Cuba. They were assembled in Florida and when the Russians saw that Kennedy was prepared to use them, they backed down because they couldn't control the escalation.

Was the fear of nuclear escalation an inhibiting factor in Vietnam? No, it wasn't. At that time, the nuclear balance was altogether different from what it had been in the Korean crisis, where the nuclear threat was the ultimate cause of ending the Korean war. The prolonged character of the Vietnam war was based on something else. It was based on a policy articulated by President Johnson, who said our overall strategic objective is to separate China and the Soviet Union, and if we press the war too hard we will push them back together. The British, he said, have had to get used to fighting border wars for centuries and we have to do so too. I didn't agree then

and don't agree now with that policy, although I respect it as serious.

When I was working Capitol Hill in those days for the State Department, every conversation on every other subject wound up with the question of Vietnam. What the congressmen all said, hawks and doves alike, was that their constituents were saying, win or get out. Not get out, but win or get out. I must say I agreed with that view.

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